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AND
China Overland Trade Report.

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CONTENTS.

Epitome of the Week, &c.	225
Leading Articles:—	
The Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Chinese Official Interference in Hongkong	226
The Sanitary Board and Trade and Property	226
Dr. Rennie's Report on the Plague	227
The Chinese Customs Service	228
Serious Outbreak of Cattle Plague	228
The Hongkong Dairy Farm Co., Limited	229
Supreme Court	230
Hongkong Sanitary Board	230
Mr. Andrew's Case at Wuchow	231
The Chinese Chamber of Commerce	232
The Loss of the <i>Spondylus</i>	232
The Loss of the <i>Humber</i>	232
The Disposal of the Bodies of Plague Victims	232
The Reported Trouble at Canton	232
Marine Court of Inquiry	232
The Police Report for 1895	233
China Sugar Refining Co., Limited	233
Geo. Fenwick & Co., Limited	236
Shanghai and Hongkew Wharf Co., Limited	236
Dr. Rennie on the Plague at Canton	236
Correspondence	238
Canton Notes	239
Raub Gold	239
The Magazine Explosion at Kiangyin	239
The Missionary Deputation to Peking	240
An Overdue Steamer	240
Viceroy Liu Inclined towards Western Progress	240
Hongkong News	241
Commercial	242
Shipping	244

BIRTHS.

On the 12th March, at Canton, the wife of J. A. SUMMERS, T'ung Wen Kwan, of a son. [715]

At Singapore, on the 3rd instant, the wife of J. F. LOBO, of a son.

MARRIAGES.

On the 11th inst., at St. John's Cathedral, Hongkong, by the Rev. R. F. Cobbold, assisted by the Rev. G. H. Davies, HERBERT H. TODD, of Manila, youngest son of the late Rev. T. Todd, rector of Newton, Lincolnshire, to ADELAIDE, daughter of Daniel EARNSHAW, Esq., C.E., of Manila. [694]

On the 12th inst., at St. Peter's Church, by the Rev. A. Hill, FRANK MAYHEW RICHARDSON, of London, England, to MAY, youngest daughter of William HORTON, Hongkong. [707]

DEATHS.

On the 30th January, at Bury St. Edmunds, Major THOMAS CARROLL DEMPSTER, A.P.D., late 28th Regiment, and formerly Acting Captain Superintendent of Police at Hongkong.

At Shanghai, on the 5th March, 1896, FREDERICK WILLIAMS WHITNEY, aged 39 years.

ARRIVALS OF MAIIS.

The American mail of the 15th February arrived, per P. M. steamer *Gaelic*, on the 14th March (28 days).

EPITOME OF THE WEEK.

The *Times* correspondent at Odessa states that the despatch of Russian troops to the Far East actively continues, although the force there already exceeds 90,000 men.

A Seoul telegram of the 27th February states that it has been decided, in accordance with the wish expressed by the King of Korea, to remove the Japanese troops from the vicinity of the Palace.

The patient from the steamer *Wingsang*, who was taken to the quarantine hospital at Singapore suffering with bubonic plague, died on the 5th March. No other case has been reported amongst the quarantined passengers.

The *N. C. Daily News* says the widow of the late Admiral Ting, of the ill-fated Peiyang fleet, committed suicide on the 16th ultimo at Hofei, Anhui, on the occasion of the interment of the late Admiral's remains.

The new Chinese loan of £16,000,000 has been concluded with the Anglo-German syndicate, in which the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank is the leading member. The contract provides that no changes shall be made in the Chinese Customs Service.

Japan is issuing bonds to the amount of 35,000,000 yen for expenses connected with the late war. The bonds bear five per cent. interest and are for 100 yen each, payment being made in eight instalments, stretching over a period of eight months.

In our Canton Notes will be found a statement that Wuchow has been declared a treaty port. Although that statement is a little premature the fact of the China Merchants establishing an office at Wuchow may be taken as very good proof that the opening of the port will not be long delayed.

The report of Geo. Fenwick & Co., Limited, for 1895, shows a net profit of \$23,745, to which has to be added \$12,194 brought forward from 1894. From this amount it is proposed to pay a dividend of 10 per cent., or \$15,000, and, after payment of consulting committee's and auditors fees, to place \$4,000 to reserve and carry forward \$16,490.

The report of the China Sugar Refining Co., Limited, for last year has been issued. Owing to the general depression in the sugar trade, the curtailment of the local demand by the China-Japan war, and the scarcity of water during the spring, the year's working resulted in a loss of \$244,332, after an allowance of \$50,000 made by the General Agents.

The Japanese Ambassador appointed to proceed to St. Petersburg to be present at the coronation of the Czar Nicholas II. has left Japan and is travelling in the French mail steamer *Melbourne*. His Imperial Highness Prince Fushimi No Muja is accompanied by the Marquis Tokugawa, several other nobles, and a suite of naval and military officers.

Proclamations have been issued at Canton with reference to the manufacture and export of fraudulent English and Dutch coins. We believe this has become quite an important industry, the low price of silver as compared with the rate at which the token coins of that metal circulate giving the counterfeiters a good profit without their having to resort to the use of base metals.

In the fire at the Club Concordia at Kobe on the 3rd March the whole of the library was destroyed. This is the most serious loss that the Club has sustained, as, besides other departments, it possessed a remarkably extensive collection of works on Japan, and many of these it will be impossible now to replace. The library is roughly estimated as being worth at least 10,000 dollars.

A serious outbreak of rinderpest has destroyed most of the cattle of the Hongkong Dairy Farm Co., Limited, and it is feared that the remaining animals will also be attacked.

At the annual meeting of the Shanghai rate-payers held on the 10th March a resolution for the adoption of electrical tramways was rejected. The papers received as yet do not contain a report of the discussion upon the subject.

The report of the Shanghai and Hongkew Wharf Co. for 1895 shows that after payment of an interim dividend of Tls. 8 per share in August the profit and loss account gives a credit balance (including Tls. 12,027 brought forward from 1894) of Tls. 51,673, which is proposed to divide among the holders of the 8,601 new shares of the Company, representing 2,867 old shares—Tls. 18 per old share.

A Chantaboon correspondent of the *Bangkok Times* writes:—The French contemplate the construction of a road between this and Battambong, and the erection of a telegraph line along the route. Extra barracks are also being built at Paknam, Chantaboon, in anticipation of the early advent of more European troops from Saigon. The entire force of French troops at present in Chantaboon consists of ninety Europeans, all told, and 300 Annamite tirailleurs.

The Viceroy at Canton has supported the Prefect at Wuchow in the statement put forward in the proclamation issued by the latter with reference to Mr. Andrew's case, namely, that after goods taken into the interior under transit pass have passed into the hands of Chinese purchasers they can be taxed by the native authorities to any extent, thus placing transit pass goods in a worse position than goods not so protected. The matter has again been referred to Peking.

We hear from Chinese sources that the present Viceroy at Canton is meditating carrying out Chang Chih-tung's project of continuing the bund along the whole length of the city facing the river. If this is done it will be a great improvement and a boon to all, facilitating movement of passengers and cargo. Another improvement would be a bridge connecting Canton and Honam, which would save loss of life and free the river from obstruction by numberless small ferry boats.

When the Nippon Yusen Kaisha was proposing to open its service to Europe subsequent to the war, says the *Yorozu*, foreign shipping firms were not slow in making preparations against this new competitor. Now that it has been decided to despatch the *Tosa-maru*, the English and French mail steamship companies are showing a determined front to oppose the N.Y.K. and have reduced their freight from 30 or 37 shillings a ton to 25 shillings, likely to be reduced further even to 20 shillings. This had been expected by the N.Y.K. and is not to be wondered at. But the opponents being the two great firms who have monopolized the Japan-Europe service for many years, the Japanese would do well to sacrifice their small temporary interests and support the cause of the Japanese firm, so as to hold the monopoly in their own hands. If the new enterprise fails, it will be not only a loss to the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, but also a great disgrace as well as a great loss to the empire of Japan.—*Japan Gazette*.

THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND CHINESE OFFICIAL INTERFERENCE IN HONGKONG.

THE Government is to be congratulated on the steps taken in reference to Colonel CHAN's officious intrusion in the affairs of this colony on the occasion of the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The matter was represented through the Consul at Canton to the Viceroy, with the result that the Kowloon Colonel has been officially censured and cautioned and an opportunity has been afforded to the Government of publicly emphasising, for the benefit of the native community, the fact of British sovereignty over this island. Perhaps Colonel CHAN himself was not conscious of any great wrongdoing in the part he played, but he ought to have been, and if he sinned in ignorance he must bear the consequences. The moral responsibility of the offence, however, must be attributed more particularly to Mr. HO AMEI, who was the moving spirit in the whole affair and must have been animated with a definite purpose in the course he pursued. Colonel CHAN was possibly a mere tool of Mr. HO AMEI's, or on the other hand, he may have entered heartily into the scheme of administering an insult to the British administration; but in Mr. HO AMEI's own case there is no possibility of doubt. That gentleman has spent the greater part of his life in the colony, he was for some time in the Government service, and he knows very well what he is about. We notice in a recent issue of the *Peking and Tientsin Times* a weak attempt to justify or palliate the proceedings on the occasion in question. Our contemporary considers it curious that "two eminent Chinese gentlemen, Dr. HO KAI, and Mr. WEI YUK, sent in disclaimers of 'courtesy and responsibility for the ceremony in question.' We fail to see the curiosity ourselves and think the gentlemen named only did what was right and proper, having regard to the positions they occupy. And Mr. HO AMEI was able to form quite as correct a judgment as Dr. HO KAI or Mr. WEI YUK, but, knowing what was right, he preferred to do what was wrong. The Tientsin paper says:— "We are not surprised that the Cantonese illustrate the fact that, after all, blood and ingrained custom are more than a match for the gratitude which ought to follow good government. We all have a weak side to ancestral customs, belief, and folk-lore, even when we are intellectually convinced of their folly; added to this John Chinaman positively loves garish display and rude noise: a semi-barbaric pageant with the blare and bray of the trumpet and the thump of the noisy tom-tom are dearer to his heart than soldier-lined streets and military bands. The Jubilee celebration of the colony gave him a real chance of showing his loyalty in a manner after his own heart, and he certainly then rose to the occasion. We think our contemporaries over solicitous about the recent ceremony: deep down the Hongkong Chinaman has a shrewd appreciation of the advantages of British rule. Every town and village throughout the length and breadth of India illustrates the same follies which our contemporaries deplore, and that too after a century and more (in many places) of British rule." This is all very pretty, but it does not touch the point at all. Indian villages are not in the habit of importing foreign officials to play the leading part in their ceremonies and studiously ignoring, with marked insult, the rulers of the country. As to the semi-

barbaric pageant with the blare and bray of the trumpet and the thump of the noisy tom-tom dearer to the Chinaman's heart than soldier-lined streets and military bands, it was nothing so childish that dictated the course adopted at the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The company that assembled on that occasion was small and very select. The order went forth that official robes were to be worn and those members of the Chamber who were not entitled to wear a mandarin's button of some sort, being too proud to appear without one, stayed away. Some of the Hongkong Chinese hold official rank by purchase and are therefore entitled to wear mandarin's buttons. The occasion of the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce was seized upon to afford these gentry an opportunity of airing their affected superiority not only over the *fan kicai* but also over the rank and file of their fellow countrymen. The more the matter is examined the more objectionable do the proceedings appear and it is much to be regretted that all who had anything to do with the ceremony cannot be made to share in the punishment meted out to Colonel CHAN.

II.

Mr. HO AMEI and Colonel CHAN find a zealous advocate and defender in the *Hongkong Telegraph* in connection with their proceedings on the occasion of the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The case is so bad, however, that the defence only exposes its weakness. If our contemporary wished to do the gentlemen named a good service it is a pity it could "not resist the temptation to say something on the other side of the question," for the greatest kindness that could be shown to them by their friends and apologists would be to let the whole matter drop. It is a case of least said soonest mended. Our contemporary contends that a German or French official might have performed a ceremony in connection with an institution of their own nationality analogous to that performed by Colonel CHAN without being guilty of any impropriety. But courtesy is always improper, by whomsoever it may be committed, although it may not be criminal; and where an officer of one state commits a courtesy towards another state, not an unknown thing even between European nations, the natural sequel is a reprimand or other penalty administered to the offending official by his own Government on the representation of the offended Government, which is precisely what has taken place in Colonel CHAN's case. But we cannot conceive of our French or German fellow residents being guilty of any such courtesy towards the Government of the colony in which they are temporarily resident as was shown by the Chinese responsible for the ceremony at the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. No good purpose would be served therefore by following up the parallel, suggested by our contemporary, as to what might happen in connection with the opening of a French or German bazaar or club. No courtesy has ever been experienced in the colony in connection with any such event and none is anticipated, whereas courtesy has been offered in connection with the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and it would be offered again at the earliest possible opportunity if such conduct were weekly submitted to and tolerated by the Government.

The point on which we chiefly join issue with our contemporary, however, is as to the legal status of the Chinese in this colony. We are told that "the Chinese merchants and traders are in the same

"position precisely as the French and Germans." That is a mistake altogether, as will be seen in a moment if the proposition be reversed and made to read that the French and Germans are in the same position in this colony as the Chinese. Every one knows that that is not so. The colony has on its statute book an Ordinance for the regulation of the Chinese population. There is no corresponding Ordinance for the regulation of the French and Germans. We have likewise an official known as the Protector of Chinese. We have no Protector of French and Germans. But the most important point of difference in a political sense, and the one that has the most direct bearing on the present case, is that France and Germany, like every other recognised nation except China, are allowed to maintain Consuls in the colony, whereas with regard to China it is a settled principle of policy, so far as this colony is concerned, that no Chinese Consul shall be allowed. It has on more than one occasion been suggested that such an officer should be established here, but the suggestion has always been strongly combatted by the local Government and the entire community has on those occasions lent its support to the Government. The reason is plain. The fact of British sovereignty over the island is only imperfectly recognised by a large proportion of the native population, who regard Hongkong as a little chip of the Chinese Empire where foreigners are by the grace of the Emperor allowed to temporarily establish themselves. The mandarins are eager to encourage this delusion, to obtain thereby a grip over the native population, and to impose squeezes. Hence it behoves the Government to resist the establishment or the intrusion of any Chinese official in the colony. On this principle the intrusion of Colonel CHAN on the occasion referred to was not a matter to be lightly passed over, especially if, as alleged, Colonel CHAN came over without an invitation and assumed the direction of the proceedings as a right inherent in his official position. The case of Mr. HO AMEI also suffers from contradictory evidence. According to Mr. HO AMEI himself the presence of Colonel CHAN was uninvited and Mr. HO AMEI was therefore not responsible for it. According to the *Telegraph* "the Government knew several days before the ceremony what the committee proposed to do and who were to be present." Leaving the conflict of evidence out of the question, however, we think it will be recognised that there is a considerable difference between the French Admiral presiding at the opening of a bazaar at the French Convent and the Colonel of Kowloon coming over to Hongkong to preside at the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

THE SANITARY BOARD AND TRADE AND PROPERTY.

If any indication were required of how trade and property may be affected by the constitution of the Sanitary Board it may be found in the present condition of the property market. While stocks and shares have been rapidly advancing in value in sympathy with the reduced rates of interest, and the general commercial prosperity, the property market, especially as regards Chinese houses, remains depressed. Under present conditions no one will think of buying Chinese property, and notwithstanding the cheapness of money and the difficulty of finding remunerative employment for it even mortgages on property of this description are not in favour. This is due to the

enforcement of sanitary by-laws involving a great deal of expense and trouble and to the general uncertainty as to what will be required next. Had it not been for the recent sanitary legislation a rise of from twenty to thirty per cent. in the value of Chinese property might reasonably have been expected during the past twelve months. The enforced expenditure imposed upon landlords has also a tendency to enhance rents, which are already so high as seriously to affect trade, for high rents are one of the greatest drawbacks the colony suffers from. The action taken by the Sanitary Board likewise interferes, or may interfere, with the growth of the population. At the present time there is an appreciable exodus going on, due, not to fear of the plague, but to fear of the Sanitary Board. In that way, the labour supply of the colony may be affected. We have no complaint to make of the action which has been taken. On the contrary we freely acknowledge that the measures that have been adopted have been necessary to meet a great emergency and that all the officials who have been engaged on the work of extirpating the plague and rendering its recurrence in epidemic form an impossibility merit the thanks of the colony. If we had had a Sanitary Board composed exclusively of landlords they could hardly, in their own interests, have done otherwise than adopt similar measures. The plague has done, and is doing, what the cholera did for England, namely, opening the eyes of the public to the paramount importance of sanitation.

But the conditions which have justified the recent action will change, the emergency will pass, and we will still, if the proposals of the Government are carried out, be left with a Sanitary Board composed of officials and endowed with enormous powers. To suppose that such a system will not be detrimental to the interests of trade and property is as absurd as it would be to suppose that if you place yourself within reach of a devil fish it will not close its tentacles around you. In what direction the detriment might be applied is shown by what is taking place at the present time in the depreciation of Chinese property and the partial exodus of the Chinese population. We know what officialdom is in all its departments; the men may be good, but the system is bad. To take one or two recent instances. A proposal to regulate British shipping out of the Chinese emigration trade is advanced in a light and airy fashion as if it were really a matter of no particular consequence, but when the community wants a flagstaff put up at Kowloon to signal approaching vessels it takes years of agitation and a special commission to overcome official obstruction. So again in financial matters, if it is a question of increasing official salaries or granting exchange compensation there is never much difficulty in finding the money, in fact it must be found, but if it is a case of constructing a public road urgently required for the public convenience, then we are told there are no funds available. It is characteristic of officialdom to do those things which it ought not to do and to leave undone those things which it ought to do, and the administration on that principle of the enormous powers that have of late been conferred on the Sanitary Board cannot fail to prove more or less disastrous.

Hongkong, being so favourably situated as it is, must make some progress, notwithstanding official obstruction, but if it is to progress at its highest possible rate the community will have to take the bull by the horns and insist upon having some voice in the manage-

ment of its own affairs. The bitter hostility of the present administration to anything in the nature of free institutions almost raises a doubt as to whether after all a Military Governor with a Municipal Council would not constitute the best machinery for the well-ruling and governing of the colony. When this idea was last broached, in Sir WILLIAM DES VŒUX's time, it was strongly opposed in this column, because we had not then given up all hope of obtaining a Municipal Council with a Civil Governor, nor are we yet prepared to formally recant the opinions expressed at that time, for the subject is a serious one and calls for mature consideration. It may be better to bear the ills we have than fly to others we know not of, but the idea suggests itself that the dreaded yoke of a Military Governor could hardly be more galling than our present yoke, and if by the change a Municipal Council could be secured for the colony the advantages would seem to be in its favour. A Civil Governor with a Municipal Council is what we should like to see, but, if that cannot be obtained, a Military Governor with a Municipal Council might be accepted with gratitude. The colony got on very well under General CAMERON and General BARKER when those officers administered the Government, and if the General Commanding were permanently placed at the head of the civil administration a very considerable economy would be effected. For the present, however, the fight must be waged on the Sanitary Board Bill, the larger questions being left over until the colony has won its point in reference to that measure. As we remarked on a previous occasion, the Bill which the Government is now seeking to pass is fraught with grave peril to the interests of property and the trade of the colony.

II.

At the meeting of the Sanitary Board on Thursday Dr. CLARK, the Medical Officer of Health, in the course of a statement as to the work being done in connection with the plague, stated that in the cleansing of houses the furniture was not thrown out of the window as a rule. Whereat the Sanitary Board laughed. The allusion was apparently to some remarks which appeared in this column with reference to the danger of allowing the Sanitary Board to become an entirely official body. The throwing of furniture out of the windows of houses subjected to official visits was an incident that occurred during the epidemic of 1894, and having occurred once it may occur again, but to avoid any misapprehension we hasten to state that we had no intention of suggesting that it was actually being repeated at the present time in connection with the cleansing operations now in progress. The point we wished to make was that the administration of the sanitary laws of the colony might be conducted in such a way as to inflict great hardship on the population and that it was desirable the Board should be composed of unofficials as a protection. In a great emergency the infliction of hardship may be inevitable and in that case must not be flinched from, but where such large powers are conferred as in the case of the Sanitary Board the control of their administration should be vested in representatives of the public. In the meantime it is satisfactory to know that our remarks have had the happy effect of enabling Dr. CLARK to beguile the Sanitary Board into the unwonted indulgence of a laugh.

The Hangyang Ironworks have commenced operations, smelting iron ore.

DR. RENNIE'S REPORT ON THE PLAGUE.

A careful perusal of Dr. RENNIE's valuable and highly interesting report on the plague at Canton should serve to reassure the timid among foreigners on the score of infectiousness. The disease, like cholera, is not a highly contagious one, and has only in a few isolated and special instances been communicated to people of Occidental origin. Dr. RENNIE notes this fact in a special manner. When in 1894 the Cantonese were dying by tens of thousands the foreigners resident in that port remained practically untouched. Dr. RENNIE says:—"The immunity enjoyed by residents on the foreign settlement of Shemeen is remarkable, seeing that it is separated only by a creek some twenty yards wide from houses where cases of the plague were common. Not only did foreigners living on the Settlement enjoy excellent health, but no case of plague occurred among their servants living on the premises." In this colony there were only a few cases of foreigners contracting the disease, and each one of these was susceptible of explanation in the sense of the victim either being in a bad state of health at the time or rashly exposing himself. Europeans who visited the hospitals, or came into contact with the plague cases in the streets, suffered no ill effects, and Dr. RENNIE tells us explicitly that "casual visitors, especially if there is free ventilation, are not liable to contract the disease." These facts cannot be too widely known, so as to counteract, if possible, some of the foolish panic which is too often created by the mere mention of the confessedly evil-sounding and terror-inspiring word "plague," intensified when, as is usually the case, the English and American papers add the ominous prefix of "Black."

It is true enough, no doubt, that the disease is practically identical with, if not as virulent as, the Plague which desolated London in the time of the Merrie Monarch, but there is equally little doubt that that outbreak was rendered exceptionally fatal owing to the foul and insanitary conditions prevailing in the metropolis at that date. Medical science was then in its infancy—at any rate its professors possessed that little knowledge which, in this case, was eminently a dangerous thing, and probably by their blundering slew far more than they healed. The virtue of cleanliness, either personal or in the house, was neither practised nor appreciated, and real disinfectants of any kind were unknown, though quackeries abounded and were only too firmly believed in, just as much as amulets of sweet smelling wooden beads are now regarded by many of the Chinese as a sovereign specific against infection. Whether the Londoners of that date would have proved as obstructive in the work of disinfection and isolation as the Chinese of Hongkong are to-day can only remain a matter of speculation. Probably, being equally ignorant, they would not have been much more tractable, but they would have had fewer prejudices to overcome. The difficulties in the path of the sanitary reformer in this colony are of a truth neither far nor small. The Chinaman hates and resents any intrusion whatever on his privacy and no less dislikes any attempt to set his house in order. He is content to live in a state of admiral disorder wherein comfort is impossible and cleanliness an unknown quantity. His floors are never swept nor garnished; the walls remain innocent of whitewash from the day he takes possession to the end of his tenancy, be it five or be it twenty years;

corners are receptacles for lumber and rubbish, wherein unclean vermin breed and flourish, and the few windows become gradually obscured by filth until all the light that penetrates the place comes through some broken pane. Where the floors are of board the dirt accumulates on them to such an extent that they become black with filth, animal and vegetable, a breeding ground for disease germs which sooner or later must break forth to avenge the violation of nature's laws.

That the plague is essentially a dirt disease is now generally admitted. It is, in short, the inevitable Nemesis which must follow entire disregard of sanitary rules. This fact is abundantly proved in the sketch given of its course by Dr. RENNIE. The disease first found a resting place in Yunnan, the towns and people of which province are exceedingly filthy, and thence, instead of spreading along the course of the West River, it travelled through Kwangsi to Pakhoi. That port is notorious for its utter disregard of the first principles of cleanliness, and there it committed severe ravages before it was carried on to Canton. In the great provincial capital of the Two Kwang all the conditions existed for the rapid dissemination of the grim visitor, and the wonder is that the mortality was not infinitely greater while the epidemic lasted. A curious and very suggestive fact is noted by Dr. RENNIE, pointing to the main factor in propagating this scourge. The majority of the victims in Canton, he says, were women and female children, most probably as he suggests, because they lead an indoor life and hence are more susceptible to the germs which surround them. Another circumstance noted by the doctor was that the epidemic was worst in wet weather, when more persons were confined to the house. This was also the case in Hongkong, and there is no doubt that the dry hot weather is more unfavourable to the bacilli, owing to the greater opportunities for light and air penetrating the frowsy dwellings and the facilities afforded to the population to pass the bulk of their time, as is their general custom in dry weather, in the open air. We have therefore learned one fact at least, that a fierce dry heat is unfavourable to the spread of this disease, and that tropical places have less cause to fear its introduction. It has also been demonstrated that a good wholesome whitewashing and general cleansing is the best preventive. The problem that remains is how to imbue the Chinese residents of this colony with a respect for sanitary rules; how to teach them to live among more cleanly surroundings and to contract a liking for soap and water. In making compulsory the whitewashing of Chinese tenements and the cleansing of the floors the Sanitary Board is evidently on the right track. Concerning the efficacy of this measure in fighting dirt diseases there cannot be two opinions.

THE CHINESE CUSTOMS SERVICE.

The statement that it has been made a condition of the new Chinese loan that no change is to be made in the Chinese Foreign Customs will be hailed with satisfaction. Fears have been entertained, and not without reason, that when Sir ROBERT HART relinquished the reins they might pass into the hands of a Chinese Commission and that all the foreigners in the service might be gradually dispensed with. The Chinese ruling class look with great jealousy upon the Foreign Customs service, which, if the foreigners could only be got rid of, would

afford so many fat billets for themselves and their followers and such large opportunities of peculation. It has now been agreed that no change of that kind shall take place during the currency of the recently concluded loan, and the foreign mercantile community may breathe all the more freely for the assurance thus afforded; for the Customs in Chinese hands would speedily degenerate into the corrupt and uncertain service that existed before the management was entrusted to foreigners. The agreement, we take it, also means that the Service is not to be handed over to any foreign Government; that Russia, for instance, will not be allowed to assume sole control over it. Curiosity will still prevail as to who will succeed Sir ROBERT HART when (we trust not for many years to come) that capable administrator retires, whether it will be an Englishman or a German, a Frenchman or a Russian; but in any case we have the assurance that the Service will be continued on its present lines.

SERIOUS OUTBREAK OF CATTLE PLAGUE.

THE HONGKONG DAIRY FARM COMPANY'S HERD DESTROYED.

It was briefly mentioned in our last week's issue that sickness had broken out among the Hongkong Dairy Farm Company's cattle at Pokfulam. The disease was at first believed to be anthrax, but was afterwards found to be rinderpest or cattle plague, and it spread with alarming and disastrous results, the greater part of the Company's herd having now been destroyed. Fortunately it has not yet extended to other parts of the colony, but the owners of the various dairies are naturally much alarmed. The following are the particulars of the outbreak as published from day to day:

12th March.

The disease which has attacked cattle at the Pokfulam Dairy Farm is believed to be anthrax. There are upwards 190 cattle on the farm, and of these about 50 have been affected. As soon as information of the outbreak reached Mr. McCallum, the Secretary to the Sanitary Board, on Tuesday, a hastily summoned meeting of the Board was held and the farm was, after careful deliberation by the members, declared an infected area. The Board's action is of course a serious matter for the Dairy Farm, as nothing will be allowed to be removed from the farm until the area has been released, but it is recognised by the Company that the Board were wise in taking the action they did, as it is the only safe course to pursue to prevent the spread of the disease. Another special meeting of the Board was held yesterday, when several matters of detail were submitted for consideration. At the farm every precaution possible has been taken to check the disease, and of course all the cattle affected have been completely isolated. It is to be hoped that the trouble will soon be a thing of the past. It speaks well for the Dairy Company that as soon as they discovered the existence of the infectious disease word was sent round to the various dairymen in the colony, who were thus put on their guard.

13th March.

We believe that no fresh cases of plague have occurred amongst the Dairy Farm Company's cattle since last report. An amusing incident in connection with the outbreak occurred on Wednesday afternoon. Dr. Hartigan and Dr. Rennie went out to look at the cattle and, having once got on the premises, the police cordon refused to allow them to pass out, the orders being that no one should leave the farm. They had to telephone direct to H.E. the Governor and get a written permit before they were released from quarantine.

14th March.

Yesterday afternoon fifty diseased cattle belonging to the Dairy Company were dumped into the sea about four miles off West Point. Thirty-three of the beasts had died from the disease and the remainder were shot on the beach below Pokfulam farm. They were conveyed in a cargo boat, their carcasses

cut open, and as they were weighted with stones they sank like lead. The dumping process was carried out under the personal direction of the Acting Captain Superintendent of Police, and over sixty coolies were employed for the work. Of course every precaution was taken to prevent the spread of the disease, and the clothing that the coolies wore whilst removing the cattle was destroyed by fire. It seems that a complaint has been made about the treatment of a number of coolies who were specially engaged on Thursday by the Dairy Company to remove the dead cattle to the beach. A quantity of rice was supplied to them, but this proved insufficient and they complained. Late in the afternoon Detectives Quincey and Holt heard that the coolies were short of food and they immediately sent for a large supply of vegetables and other viands, which were given to the hungry men. It afterwards transpired that there was no proper sleeping accommodation for the coolies. They were told to sleep in a byre which, it is said, diseased cattle had used and which was in an unwholesome condition. Some of the coolies resented this treatment and during the night about thirty of them escaped from the farm by taking various paths and thus eluding the sentries. It is to be hoped that what was perhaps a misunderstanding will not lead to the spread of the disease.

Dr. Atkinson stated at the meeting of the Sanitary Board on Thursday in reference to the disease amongst the cattle at the Dairy Farm that he and Dr. Lowson considered it to be a form of septicæmia accompanied by high fever. We understand that taking into consideration later information as to symptoms, etc., of the animals affected it is considered evident by the doctors that the disease must be rinderpest or cattle plague.

16th March.

Matters have taken a most serious turn at the Pokfulam Dairy Farm. Up to yesterday morning of the total number of cattle stricken with disease was one hundred and thirty-four, and there are now only sixty (presumably) healthy cattle left in the sheds. Up to Saturday the number of deaths was sixty-seven, and the whole of them had been dumped into the sea by mid-day. During the day, however, the disease made its appearance amongst the isolated herd, and thirty-two fresh cases were reported to a special meeting of the Sanitary Board which was held in the afternoon. The number rapidly increased and by yesterday morning the total number of cases apart from the first batch was sixty-seven. This loss is of course a most serious one for the Dairy Company, and there is a likelihood now that the whole of the remaining cattle will fall victims to the dread disease.

We have made careful inquiries into the subject and as a result we are forced to the conclusion that an egregious blunder has been made in dealing with the outbreak, and it is to be hoped that a strict investigation will be made in order that the blame for the bungle shall be laid upon the responsible party. Perhaps it was owing to the disgraceful mismanagement of the whole affair that the disease assumed such alarming proportions; but of course this is a question that only experts can decide. At any rate, the state of things that existed for nearly a whole week at the Dairy Farm cannot possibly be defended on sanitary grounds, and therefore there is a strong probability that the spread of the disease was due to this neglect. It seems that the disease first manifested itself at the farm on Thursday, the 5th inst. On the following Sunday twelve cows died. On Monday the Colonial Secretary was informed of the outbreak by the Dairy Company. On Tuesday morning the news first reached Mr. McCallum. On Tuesday mid-day a special meeting of the Sanitary Board was held and the place was declared infected. At that time fifty cattle had been stricken with the disease, and the Board ordered the carcasses to be burnt. No carcasses were burnt because, we believe, the Company said the expense would be too great. On Wednesday, the 11th inst., the Board met again, and it was resolved, where burning was impracticable, to have the bodies of the cattle buried in graves ten feet deep, and the carcasses covered with unsalinated lime. On Wednesday afternoon

coolies were engaged to dig pits for the reception of carcases, but for some reason not an ounce of lime was obtained. The work of digging out the graves proceeded until about three feet of earth had been excavated, when the work was stopped, either because a few stones got in the way of the shovels or there were not sufficient men employed; most likely the latter was the real reason. It must be remembered that during all this time deaths amongst the cattle continued to occur. On Thursday the Sanitary Board decided to revoke the previous orders and have the carcases dumped into the sea, and at the ordinary meeting the Secretary confidently remarked that Pokfulam would be clear of infected cattle by Friday mid-day. By Friday mid-day not a single carcase had been removed to the cargo boats; indeed, with the exception of about seven which were lying on the beach all the others were lying about the farm and the pathways leading from it to the sea. On Friday mid-night there still remained about twenty carcases unburied, and it was not until about Saturday mid-day that the work of removal was completed.

It does not need a very vivid imagination to picture the disgusting condition of the farm during these days. From Sunday morning, the 8th instant, to the following Friday afternoon at least, carcases of cattle were lying exposed to the atmospheric influences without a single step being taken to cover them with even a dusting of a disinfectant. Some of the cattle had been ripped open by doctors, and all were in an advanced state of decomposition. Hungry dogs from the neighbourhood in search of tasty morsels greedily ate the rotten meat and licked the blood that was lying about the place. The dogs could not be kept away and a couple of detectives went out there and shot a dozen of them to prevent further mischief. Even the coolies who were engaged to remove the carcases out to sea turned up their noses at the putrid stench that pervaded the whole farm—and goodness knows coolies are inured to foul smells. This is no exaggerated description, and an explanation must be made by somebody in authority why speedier action was not taken to get rid of the carcases, although in justice to the Acting Captain Superintendent of Police it must be stated that the fault did not rest with him as the dumping edict did not go forth until Thursday afternoon. In any other place but insanitary Hongkong decisive action would have been taken by the authorities in such a case as this. As soon as an animal showed signs of the disease it would have been shot and the body either burnt or flung into a pit and covered with quicklime. In Hongkong both these orders were given and almost immediately withdrawn and the long and distinctly unhealthy process of dumping into the sea authorised. It is a paltry excuse that the expense of burning or burying would be too great; no expense should ever be spared in an outbreak of cattle plague, and it is questionable whether after all the Company would not have gained in the long run by erecting suitable apparatus for burning the carcases, as was ordered in the first instance by the Sanitary Board. We now see the serious consequences of all this shuffling of orders and dilatoriness in taking proper measures. It is to be hoped that the sixty-seven cattle which were taken ill yesterday with the disease will be dealt with more promptly than the previous sixty-seven. We were informed by the Dairy Company yesterday that one of the cattle had died and the remainder would be shot during the day and dumped into the sea this morning. Why could not this have been done in the first place, or, better still, why was not the burning order enforced?

It appears that there was almost a riot amongst the coolies employed on the farm during Thursday for grave digging. As we have previously stated, they had only rice to eat and were told to sleep in an infected matted, which was in a filthy condition, and their only covering consisted of a few bags. The coolies became very indignant at their treatment towards the evening, and even when a substantial amount of good food had been procured for them by Detectives Quincey and Holt they threatened to break into open rebellion at being cast into such disgusting quarters. Force had to be used to detain them,

but during the night about thirty of them managed to escape in the darkness—there was not a single light on the premises—and they bolted over the hedges and went home.

The isolated cattle are kept in the "Home of Nazareth" shed, which is situated some distance away from the other sheds, and the Europeans in charge of it were not allowed to go near the diseased cattle. It was in this shed that the fresh outbreak occurred, so that the outlook for the Company is far from promising.

17th March.

Happily no fresh cases of plague at the Pokfulam Dairy Farm were reported at the Sanitary Board offices yesterday. Mr. McCallum, the Secretary to the Board, informs us that the real nature of the disease was not known last Thursday week. Some of the cattle showed signs of illness on that day, but it was attributed to ordinary fever. It was not until the following Saturday that the seriousness of the complaint was demonstrated. Mr. Walker, the Superintendent at the farm, at once sent a message to the directors who visited the farm. As we stated yesterday the Government first knew of the outbreak on Monday, the 9th inst., when the Colonial Secretary received a letter from the Company. This letter was forwarded (as it should have been in the first instance) to Mr. McCallum, who sent an inspector to the farm the same morning. Later in the day Dr. Clark, accompanied by the inspector, visited the farm, and on the following day (Tuesday) at noon a special meeting of the Sanitary Board was held. We make these explanations because in our article yesterday we said that the disease first manifested itself last Thursday week, and that Mr. McCallum did not receive news of the outbreak until Tuesday. Of course the latter statement is correct in so far as Mr. McCallum did not get definite news of the character of the disease on Monday.

Mr. McCallum heard yesterday morning that the mate of the *Heungshan* saw the carcase of a cow floating in the water as the vessel was steaming towards Hongkong. The mate concluded that the carcase was one of the diseased ones dumped in on Friday. If this is the case the bags of stones which were placed round each carcase must have become dislodged from this particular beast by some means; perhaps a sea tenant could give some information on the point.

The whole of the sixty-seven cattle which were seized with the disease on Saturday and Sunday were walked down to the beach during Sunday by a gang of forty coolies. The animals were shot and yesterday they were all dumped into the sea.

THE HONGKONG DAIRY FARM CO., LIMITED.

ITS POSITION AND PROSPECTS.

In view of the serious disaster which has befallen the Dairy Farm Company a brief retrospect of the financial history of the Company and a statement of its present position may not be without interest. The Company was formed in 1886 with a capital of \$30,000, increased in 1889 to \$100,000. The results of its working are shown in the annexed table, the profit shown in the first column being the amount remaining after writing off for depreciation. For 1892 the gross profit was \$10,879.20, while the amount written off was \$11,951.61, showing a net loss on the year's working of \$1,072.41, as shown in the table:

	Profit	Loss	Depreciation
1887	—	\$13,186.91	—
1888	\$ 3,584.37	—	\$ 3,623.64
1889	4,373.89	—	3,207.93
1890	5,562.23	—	5,109.89
1891	3,419.30	—	8,944.27
1892	—	1,072.41	11,951.61
1893	5,316.47	—	6,076.06
1894	2,691.46	—	6,005.60
1895	10,024.26	—	7,368.54

Total \$34,971.98 \$14,259.32 51,387.54

The net profit for the whole period, after deducting the losses, amounts therefore to \$20,712.66, of which \$18,000 has been distributed by way of dividends, namely, 3 per cent. for 1891, 5 per cent. for 1893, and 10 per cent.

for 1895, or an average for the whole period of nine years of 2 per cent. The position of the Company at the end of last year was a very promising one; the business had been thoroughly organised, a valuable connection had been established, and in the absence of extraordinary disaster such as that which has now occurred there appeared every reason to anticipate a steady ten per cent. dividend. The outbreak of cattle plague which has now occurred and swept off the Company's herd has altered all that and the shareholders will have to consider whether it is worth while to start business afresh or whether it would be more profitable to wind up and divide the remaining assets.

At the date of the last report, 19th December, 1895, the Company had cash in hand \$4,522.58, on fixed deposit \$25,000, and accounts receivable \$4,269.23, giving a total of \$33,791.81 in monetary assets, from which has to be deducted the dividend of \$10,000 and accounts payable \$1,819.38, leaving a balance of \$21,972.43, which if divided up would give a trifle over \$2 per share. The other assets of the Company are now of doubtful value. The cattle were valued at \$21,131.69, and this may be regarded as a total loss. The farm was valued at \$27,000 and the buildings thereon at \$16,620.05. There is at present no demand for land in that part of the colony and it is doubtful whether a sale could be effected at any price, but if the farm were held until there is a tramway out to Aberdeen it might acquire some marketable value. The buildings are useless for any other purpose than that for which they were built. The town depot is valued in the accounts at \$9,643.72, but the terms on which the land is held from the Government do not permit of its being used for any other purpose than as a depot for the sale of milk and if the Company ceased business the land would be resumed. Some compensation might possibly be granted by the Government for the value of the building standing upon it. After deducting these items the remaining assets of the Company are small and what they realised would probably be swallowed up in paying the extraordinary expenses the Company has been put to by the outbreak of cattle plague.

The directors, we believe, are in favour of "not giving up." Shareholders generally have perhaps hardly begun to think about the future, their attention being concentrated upon the present losses. It is not so much a question of continuing business as of starting afresh some months, possibly years, hence. It would take some months to get together a fresh herd, and it would also be unsafe to place cattle on the farm for a long time to come. In the United Kingdom, when cattle plague was experienced there, we believe the policy adopted was to burn all cattle sheds where the disease had shown itself and not to use the same grazing ground again for a year or two. At Hamilton Park, where one of the two remaining herds of Caledonian cattle is kept, the herd was almost totally wiped out by the plague. Six cows and one bull were, however, saved, and these were put down a disused coal pit to keep them from all contaminating influences and were kept there for two years. When they were brought above ground again entirely new shelter sheds were built for them, the old ones having been destroyed. The precautions taken in that instance were perhaps greater than would be deemed necessary from a purely mercantile point of view, but taking the lowest possible estimate it would be six months before the Dairy Farm Company could recommence business. Their connection has been destroyed and building up the business again would be a slow process, for competition is now keen. The Dairy Farm Company was started with an intermixture of the philanthropic with the commercial element. It was considered, rightly or wrongly, that the milk supply of the colony was not satisfactory and the Company was established with the purpose of amending it and incidentally to make a profit for the shareholders. It was in regard to the philanthropic side of the business that Sir William Des Vœux was induced to grant free of payment the site for the town depot, which was a mistaken dealing with public land; but it is unnecessary to go into that point now. The depot has undoubtedly been a great public convenience and has especially been appreciated

by ladies from the Peak when they had to come to town for shopping purposes. The closing of the dépôt would therefore be a matter for regret apart altogether from the financial considerations affecting the Company, but as regards the milk supply of the colony we believe the private dairies are now able to meet all demands with entire satisfaction both as regards quality and quantity. The community will perceive have to rely upon them for many months to come and if the Dairy Farm Company should then recommence business it would not be such an easy matter to establish a connection as it was in the early days of the Company's history.

SUPREME COURT.

12th March.

IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

BEFORE HON. W. M. GOODMAN (ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE).

CHAN LAI HUNG v. CHAN FUNG FIRM.

This was a claim for \$7,000, being the value of goods belonging to the plaintiff and alleged to have been wrongfully converted by the defendant firm to their own use.

Mr. Robinson, instructed by Mr. Ewens, applied that the plaintiff having failed to attend, the cause be struck out pursuant to sect. 61 (2) of the Code.

The Court being satisfied that the plaintiff had received notice of hearing, it was ordered that the cause be struck out, with costs in favour of the defendant.

CHARLES ST. GEORGE CLEVERLY v. LUM YAT AND THE HON. HO KAI AND WEI-A-YUK.

This was an application for a decree of final foreclosure against Lum Yat, the mortgagee. Some years ago Lum Yat mortgaged certain premises to the plaintiff by a second mortgage; he then obtained further advances from Kwok Tun, whose interest later passed into the hands of Hon. Ho Kai and Wei-a-Yuk. These parties have already been foreclosed and the present application was to finally foreclose the mortgage. Hon. H. E. Pollock appeared in support of the application, and, after going into the various documents and Registrar's certificates, his Lordship said—I am satisfied the plaintiff is entitled to the order asked for, and decree final foreclosure accordingly.

HONGKONG SANITARY BOARD.

A meeting of the Sanitary Board was held at the offices on the afternoon of the 12th March. Hon. F. A. Cooper (Director of Public Works) presided, and there were also present Hon. Commander W. C. H. Hastings (Acting Captain Superintendent of Police), Dr. Atkinson (Acting Colonial Surgeon), Dr. Clark (Medical Officer of Health), Mr. N. J. Ede, and Mr. H. MacCallum (Secretary).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

THE SALE OF TAIPINGSHAN BUILDING MATERIALS.—IMPORTANT EXPLANATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT.

The following letter to the President was read from Mr. N. J. Ede:

DEAR SIR.—I observe in to-day's *Daily Press* a notification of the sale by auction of the materials of some of the houses in the resumed area of Taipingshan. I would like the Sanitary Board to recommend to the consideration of H.E. the Governor that no wood of any kind (if such there be) should be sold, but that it should be removed from the buildings and burnt within the area. I believe that plague can be easily transmitted by means of such wood, but though (as some think) that may not be so, some of the timber that I personally saw a little time ago in that area was of the filthiest description and not fit to use for any purpose whatever. As regards the bricks, I submit that none of the foundations of the houses or any below, say, three feet from the surface of the ground should be sold. At a confidential meeting of the Sanitary Board a few days ago I expressed the opinion that instead of the present practice

of concreting the basements of houses over the dirt, the saturated ground should be first dug out and renewed, replaced by clean soil, and concrete laid over that. You were of opinion that the disturbing of such soil would be very dangerous and might spread disease and the two medical members of the Board agreed with you. If that be the case it seems to me that the bricks and materials in the resumed area which have been embedded in the ground as foundations and those just above them should not be sold, but be removed and placed beyond anyone's reach. I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

N. J. EDE.

Hongkong, 2nd March, 1896.

To the President of the Sanitary Board.
The following minutes were attached.—

The Health Officer—I agree.

The Acting Colonial Surgeon—The wood I understand is being burnt and it is only the bricks above the surface of the ground that are being sold. Seeing that all the houses were thoroughly disinfected and cleansed before the area was resumed, and also were completely denuded of all movable contents, only the bare walls and roof being left, and that they have been exposed to atmospheric influences for more than eighteen months, I consider the likelihood of any infection remaining as extremely improbable.

The Acting Captain Superintendent of Police—From all scientific statements I think the houses should be burnt and the materials dumped on Kellett's Bank.

The President—in the first place, before dealing with the important subject of this letter, I must point out

(a) No material in the resumed area of Taipingshan below ground level has been sold.

(b) Mr. Ede's version of my opinion regarding the disturbing of the soil is misleading. The opinion I expressed was that if the soil was so bad as Mr. Ede represented it to be, I thought it was less liable to cause disease if concreted over than if it was disturbed during the occupation of the houses within the four walls of which it was situated.

As regards the main subject of the letter, if the Board agree that any portion of the material in the houses in the resumed area of Taipingshan is capable of easily transmitting plague, the policy hitherto adopted by the Board of allowing the re-occupation of numbers of houses throughout the city in which plague occurred during 1894, 1895, and the present year requires serious consideration.

The houses in the resumed area of Taipingshan have been cleared, disinfected, lime-washed, practically gutted, and exposed to the action of the sun, light, and air for upwards of eighteen months.

The houses in other parts of the city in which plague occurred have been cleaned, disinfected, and lime-washed, but their exposure to light, sun, and air (a factor of great importance) has of necessity been far less perfect than has been the case in respect of the houses in the resumed area, nor has the woodwork forming a part of the structure of the building been removed.

If therefore the houses in the resumed area of Taipingshan are still infected with plague, much more must that be the case in respect of the other houses in the city in which cases of plague have occurred.

If Mr. Ede's opinion is correct there is no alternative but to recognise the fact that in this city we have and have had for upwards of the past eighteen months many houses plague infected and liable at any moment to transmit the disease to their occupants.

If such a state of things has existed, and considering that these houses in which cases of plague have occurred are in many instances occupied by from ten to twenty persons, that they are situated in crowded parts of the city inhabited by the poorer class, and that they are deprived of a reasonable amount of fresh air and light, all conditions generally accepted as favouring the occurrence and spread of plague, is it to be supposed that only solitary cases of the disease would occur? Surely it is more reasonable to expect that our experience would be similar to that of Dr. Cabadias in Hillah and Bagdad, as recorded in the ninth annual report of the Local Government Board 1879-80, viz., that when plague entered a house it seldom spared its inmates and often carried them all off in a week's time. Such, however, has not been our experience. On looking through the statistics of plague cases during 1895 and the present year only twelve instances will be found of cases having been discovered in and traced to houses which were closed in 1894, and in only one instance, viz., No. 2, Sheung Fung Lane, in which two cases have occurred, has more than one case been discovered in or traced to any one of these houses. Nevertheless this is in accord with the experience elsewhere. On page 59 of the above mentioned report will be found the following, referring to the plague in Mesopotamia, 1876-77:—"The most effectual means for the protection of a community against the propagation of plague are the isolation of the sick, the destruction by fire of their clothes, and the whitewashing with lime and free ventilation of the domiciles in which cases of plague occur. The plague reappeared in only one out of 350 houses which had been white-washed after an outbreak of plague in them, whilst its reappearance in houses that had been merely abandoned for a time, after an attack of that disease, but which had not been white-washed, was frequent occurrence."

Looking back to the epidemics of plague that raged over the greater part of England during the 13th and 16th centuries we find that the disease was eradicated mainly by improved sanitation, and with one exception only, viz., that in the city of London, were the houses destroyed by fire. Great stress has, however, been laid on the beneficial

results of the great fire of London, but as pointed out by a recent writer there is no reason to believe that the plague would not have been eradicated from that city as it had been from other cities and towns without recourse to fire. The beneficial results of the fire so far as ridding the city of plague must therefore be looked upon as mainly confined to the facilities it afforded for the immediate introduction of improved sanitation.

In view of the opinion expressed by some as regards the sale of building material in the resumed area of Taipingshan I would point out that—

(a) Early in 1895 the débris that existed in the area was collected and burnt.

(b) Before any material was sold, which did not occur till September, 1895, the light woodwork was removed from the houses for sale and burnt.

(c) Early this year, owing to the practical impossibility of preventing persons from stealing the wood left in the remaining houses, these houses were gutted and the wood-work burnt.

(d) No material has been sold below ground level.

(e) As far as I have been able to ascertain no workman engaged within the area has contracted plague.

Sporadic cases of plague occurred in April, 1895, and continued to occur, except during the month of October, throughout the year. Towards the end of January the number of cases considerably increased, and in February a still further increase took place.

Considering the overcrowded state of portions of the city in which the plague has occurred during this year, and the habits of the Chinese, the following quotation from the Local Government report previously referred to is important:—"Dr. Petresco is disposed to assign the great outburst of plague in Veliuanka in December, 1878, to a sudden fall of temperature causing relatively greater crowding of the families in consequence of the more careful exclusion of fresh air from the living rooms."

In conclusion I must state that there appears to be no evidence that the existence of plague in the city at the present time is in any way traceable to the re-opening of the houses in which plague occurred in 1894, or to the sale of building material in the resumed area of Taipingshan.

The evidence available leads one to the conclusion that so long as the present overcrowding of the poorer portions of the city exists and houses without sufficient supply of fresh air and light are allowed to be occupied, the accumulation of dirt and filth and consequent lowering of the vitality of the population will continue, and the periodical reappearance of plague can only be looked upon as the natural result of such a state of things.

The PRESIDENT—Has any member any resolution to move in connection with these papers?

Mr. EDE—With reference to the question of the houses in which plague has existed and where plague has not recurred and the wood not been destroyed, I should say, as far as I understand the methods of the plague; that it would be desirable to burn, but unfortunately we cannot do it. But where you have wood that you can burn I should certainly be in favour of doing it. Of course you cannot burn the whole town down, and you cannot burn the houses which are inhabited, but I do not think the fact that you cannot burn wood in houses that are inhabited should prevent your burning wood that you can spare. Of course I may be wrong. I am not a scientific man, but from what I have heard and read I believe it is the best thing to do.

The PRESIDENT—I believe the Acting Captain Superintendent of Police is not only in favour of burning the woodwork but removing the bricks as well.

The ACTING CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE—I certainly think it would be a good thing to do so.

The ACTING COLONIAL SURGEON—From a medical point of view I think it is extremely improbable that any infection remains in the resumed area of Taipingshan. We must be guided by experts in a matter of this nature and Professor Kitasato in his "Report on the investigation into the cause of the Plague" states with regard to his experiments with the bacillus;—"Bacilli (plague) directly exposed to the sun were found to be entirely killed after an exposure of three or four hours. Those left exposed to the air for a period varying from one to thirty-six hours began to grow after the lapse of two days, whilst those that were thus exposed for four days did not present a trace of growth even after one week from the time of inoculation." With regard to the disinfection of the houses in the infected area, this was most thoroughly done with chloric gas, the disinfection being commenced on the 22nd June, 1894, and finished on the 3rd July. After this was finished 300 men of the "whitewash brigade" entered and removed the cubicles, cock-lofts, windows, &c., and cleansed the houses. Not one of these men contracted the disease; this shows how thorough must have been the destruction of the bacilli even then, and when

we bear in mind that in addition the whole of these "gutted" houses have been exposed to atmospheric influences for over eighteen months I fail myself to see how any infection can be considered as remaining within the area. There is absolutely no proof whatever that the infection has been conveyed in any of the material which has been taken away. Personally I think it advisable that any woodwork which remains should be burnt, as it can now be of very little value and may allay public alarm, which, however, from a scientific point of view, is groundless.

The MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—I should like to offer a word of explanation of my very brief minute. Why I put the remark "I agree" was that I looked upon the matter as a concession to popular prejudice. I have not the slightest belief myself that either the woodwork or the bricks communicated plague, but it seemed to me that the result of the sale was very small and the popular prejudice so great against the sale that I thought it would be better to agree on this ground. This would give people the opportunity of saying there was no danger, and although we are convinced in our own minds that the disease is not communicated by the sales, it seems desirable to make concessions to popular prejudice even when contrary to scientific results. For that reason I agreed that the wood should not be sold but burnt.

The PRESIDENT—Since this subject has been brought before the Board and more particularly as it has occupied some attention of late in the colony I think it would be very unfortunate if the matter were left without the Board having some definite resolution on the point. Either the Board is totally wrong and has been totally wrong, in its methods of exterminating the plague bacillus, or it has been right. If it has been totally wrong, then the sooner we mend our ways the better. On the 6th June, 1895, the project of dealing with the resumed area of Taipingshan was brought before the Legislative Council, it having been previously considered at two meetings of the Public Works Committee. At the meeting of the Legislative Council the project was, with one exception—Hon. E. R. Belilius—unanimously approved. At that time there was no hint given that the condition of the buildings in Taipingshan was such as to render it likely that demolition and sale would cause the spread of the plague. It was clearly stated in paragraph 31 of the special report that it was the intention to offer for sale all Block A and to sell the houses and materials and to retain a portion of the land for public use. This is nine months ago, and as far as I know the scheme was public property and received a good deal of attention at the time. No member of the Board had the slightest hesitation about the completeness of the proposal, and I think it is somewhat unfortunate that if anyone was of a contrary opinion he should have allowed nine months to elapse before having the matter dealt with by the Board. If they intended to represent their opinions before the matter was dealt with by the Board the sooner they had done so the better. I have failed to find any new facts brought before the public, beyond those existing at the time the project was approved by the Legislative Council, to justify the Board or anyone else in changing their opinion now so far as the consideration of the facts is concerned. I do not think this matter should stand as it is, and I propose to place the following resolution on the records of the Board—"That the Board is in possession of no facts to warrant the belief that the material remaining in the resumed area of Taipingshan is infected with the plague bacillus. On the contrary, in the opinion of the Board, the statistics in its possession prove conclusively that steps taken to eradicate the bacillus from infected premises in 1894 have been attended with most satisfactory results. The Board, however, in view of the popular feeling on the subject recommend that if further material is sold steps should be taken to burn as far as practicable all wood still remaining in the buildings."

The ACTING COLONIAL SURGEON—I second that.

The resolution was carried. The President, the Acting Colonial Surgeon, and the Medical Officer of Health voted for the resolution. The

Acting Captain Superintendent of Police and Mr. Ede did not vote.

BAD WELL WATER.

Six samples of well water analysed by the Government Analyst were certified to be unfit for potable purposes and likely to prove injurious to health. The wells were ordered to be closed.

THE FORESHORE AT STONECUTTERS' ISLAND.

Mr. J. Livesey, officer in charge of the Government gunpowder depots, Stonecutters' Island, wrote calling the Board's attention to the practice of boatpeople in charge of the contractors' dust boats from Hongkong dumping the sweepings and refuse of the city into Chinese waters to the north and east of Stonecutters' Island. The refuse "ranged from every sort of vegetable to a still-born child" and was carried on to the beach.

The following minutes were attached:

Mr. EDE—I think if the contractors are warned to carry out their contracts properly it will be sufficient.

The Acting Colonial Surgeon—Would it not be possible for the Board in the next contract to specify that the rubbish, etc., must be dumped into the sea further away from the colony? Undoubtedly a nuisance exists near Stonecutters' Island. What the cause of it is I am unable to say. I have experienced it myself whilst sailing past.

The Health Officer—I have inspected the north and south beaches of Stonecutters' Island this day. The north beach I find to be very clean; the south beach is littered with seaweed, amongst which is a small quantity of vegetable refuse from the shipping in the port. The refuse from the plague isolation boats, which are now all removed, must have been infinitesimal; there is no evidence to show that any of this flotsam and jetsam comes specially from the contractors' boats, as it is the ordinary debris of a busy harbour and is moreover not in any way offensive, at present at least. I will instruct the Kowloon contractor to carry out the provisions of his contract, i.e., to remove or burn such debris as may wash up on these foreshores twice every month, and this will, I think, meet the case.

The Secretary—The actual facts should be stated before this matter comes before the Board. This man Livesey has always some grievance to air in somewhat wild language. The Kowloon scavenging contractor has to keep the colonial foreshore clean. The military and naval people have to look after their own foreshores. I doubt very much if any of the refuse washed up on Stonecutters' Island comes from the dust boats. It is the shipping generally that is responsible for the debris to be seen floating in the harbour. Every boat and ship disposes of its waste by dumping into the water. I do not think it is worth while bothering any further about this complaint. The complainant is a most troublesome man and is greatly in need of curbing.

It was resolved to instruct the officers who had the matter in hand to do their best to keep the foreshore clean.

MORTALITY STATISTICS.

For the week ended 29th February the death rate was 26.8 per 1,000 per annum, as compared with 20.8 for the corresponding period of last year. For the week ended 7th March the death rate was 32 per 1,000 per annum, as compared with 19.9 for the corresponding week of last year.

THE PLAGUE WORK.

The PRESIDENT said it would be of interest to learn from the Medical Officer of Health what work was being done in connection with the plague.

The MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—Six acting Inspectors of nuisances have been appointed and since they commenced a fortnight ago the number of houses dealt with has been 1,057, and of these 502 have been disinfected and cleansed, and those 502 houses comprise 1,230 floors, all separate dwellings. In addition 555 houses have been inspected personally, altogether 1,451 floors, and the tenants of these have been given the option of cleansing the houses themselves; of course if that is not done it will be necessary for us to cleanse these as well. I will now state what the procedure is in regard to cleansing so as to do away with some misunderstanding that seems to exist on the subject. In the first place the furniture is not thrown out of the window as a rule (laughter); it is taken out through the doors. Secondly, the occupants of the houses are not compelled to sleep in the streets at night. The work commences at nine o'clock in the morning and is finished at five o'clock in the afternoon.

People are warned on the day previous that their houses are going to be cleansed. Each house is cleansed within an hour or an hour and a half, and the tenant has to move his furniture temporarily into the street while the coolies do their work. About 150 coolies are employed every day and in each of the premises the floors are scrubbed with Jeys fluid and the walls lime-washed. When that process is over—it takes from an hour to an hour and a half—the people are told that they can take their furniture back into their houses, and as the work closes finally at five o'clock in the evening there is no necessity whatever for any people to sleep out in the open streets. With regard to the damage to clothing by rain I have given instructions that whenever it rains the work shall cease, so that the people's effects are not damaged by rain. One day last week no work was done on account of the rain and the inspectors were employed in attending to the removal of illegal cocklofts and cubicles. Everything is done in regard to the feelings of the tenants to render the houses clean and the work is being pushed forward as quickly as possible.

The PRESIDENT—In cases in which the tenants clean the houses themselves the Inspectors see that the work is properly done?

The MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—Yes, some tenants have sent in written applications for permission to do the work themselves.

The ACTING COLONIAL SURGEON—I think it is advisable to give tenants twenty-four hours' notice before the houses are cleaned.

The MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH—We give notice on the preceding day; it is practically twenty-four hours' notice.

THE OUTBREAK OF DISEASE AT THE DAIRY FARM.

The SECRETARY—The Dairy Farm Company have employed a number of men to see to the work of removing the dead cattle. They will be taken about four miles away from the island in a cargo boat and stones will be put round them and their carcasses cut open so that there will be no chance of their coming to the surface again and being carried on to the shore. The work is being carried on as quickly as possible, and it is expected that the whole place will be free of the infected cattle by noon to-morrow. When the cargo boat which has been engaged for the purpose comes back it will be thoroughly disinfected and either re-tarred or re-varnished.

Mr. EDE—Would it not be better to destroy the boat? It would not cost more than \$200 I suppose.

The SECRETARY—It is a large cargo boat and would cost more than that.

Mr. EDE—Can it be thoroughly disinfected?

The SECRETARY—Oh, yes.

The ACTING COLONIAL SURGEON—I may mention that Dr. Lawson and myself have examined microscopically the blood and lymphatic gland from one of the dead cattle handed to us on the 10th inst. by the Medical Officer of Health. We found certain bacilli present in the gland, but the result of inoculation experiments on mice has proved conclusively that the disease is not anthrax. We have further examined the spleen of another body that died yesterday and find nothing definite present.

Mr. EDE—Can you say what the disease is?

The ACTING COLONIAL SURGEON—There is not sufficient evidence to show. It is evidently septicæmia of some sort accompanied by high fever.

The ACTING CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE—There does not appear to be any cattle disease on the mainland as far as we can find out.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Board then adjourned until Thursday week.

MR. ANDREW'S CASE AT WUCHOW.

The interference of the local authorities at Wuchow with the disposal of Mr. Andrew's goods at that port has, we hear, been fully endorsed by the Viceroy and the question has now to be decided between the Tsungli Yamen and the British Government whether the treaty provisions as to transit passes are to be observed or not. It will be remembered that on representations being made by the British Chargé d'Affaires to the Tsungli Yamen instructions

were given that a proclamation should be issued permitting the free sale of the goods. A proclamation was accordingly issued by the Prefect of Wuchow to this effect, but with an intimation added that when the goods had passed into the hands of native merchants they would be taxed with lekin and duty again. It appears that the Viceroy, instead of condemning this action on the part of the Prefect, supports it, maintaining that it is not contrary to the instructions of the Tsungli Yamen and that when once goods conveyed inland under transit pass have reached their destination and been sold to Chinese the foreign merchant has nothing more to do with them; in other words, that the native authorities can tax them to any extent they please. If this contention were admitted the transit pass would be reduced to worse than a nullity. It is satisfactory to have the matter brought to this concise and definite issue, for the whole question of transit passes in the South must now be decided one way or the other. The treaty provision on the subject must either be upheld or it must be formally abandoned once for all. Mr. Andrew's case is now proved up to the hilt by Chinese documentary evidence and a case more clear and complete could not be found.

THE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

THE COLONEL OF KOWLOON OFFICIALLY REPRIMANDED FOR TAKING PART IN THE OPENING CEREMONY.

It will be remembered that at the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which was attended by very objectionable features, the principal part in the ceremony was taken by Colonel Chan Kwan-shan, the officer in charge of Chinese Kowloon. It appears that the Government complained to the Viceroy of Canton of this official's procedure, and on the 12th March a proclamation in Chinese to the following effect was issued—

PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY SIR WILLIAM ROBINSON, GOVERNOR OF HONGKONG.

Hongkong is a British possession and with its business, great or small, the Chinese officials have nothing whatever to do, nor are they entitled to come here to make inquiries in reference thereto. This is known to the whole world. At the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce the Colonel in charge at Kowloon came over here to take part in the ceremony. His interference in the sphere of the Hongkong Government was quite improper. I have communicated this matter to the British Consul at Canton, requesting him to report it to the Viceroy. I have now received a copy of a despatch reprimanding the said Colonel, and I now issue this proclamation with the reprimand attached. My object in so doing is to let all people know that the power of the Government is supreme and that no one can entrench upon it. The Viceroy's despatch reprimanding the Colonel is as follows:—

"I have received a despatch from the British Consul informing me that a complaint has been received from H.E. the Governor of Hongkong that on the occasion of the opening of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce at Hongkong the Colonel in official robes went over to take the leading part in the ceremony. But Hongkong is a British possession, and the Colonel's going over to represent the Chinese in the ceremony was most improper. It is my duty to reprimand him and he is hereby reprimanded accordingly and informed that if in future he interferes with any of the affairs of Hongkong he will be dismissed. Let him not disobey."

THE LOSS OF THE "SPUNDILUS."

There can be no doubt that the vessel which was wrecked on Cape Varela is the tank steamer *Spondilus* and she has no doubt by this time become a total loss. The German steamer *Holstein*, from Singapore, arrived in Hongkong on the 10th March and from information gathered on board we learn that the *Spondilus* was seen on the rocks on Friday evening. The *Holstein* was then about two ships' length off and it could be plainly seen that the vessel had been

abandoned by the crew as the boats had gone, and the boat ropes were hanging over the side, indicating that the boats had been lowered. There was then no ensign on the vessel but two signals were flying, namely, "Assistance necessary," and "Can you tow me off?" It was in consequence of these signals that the captain of the *Holstein* went close up to the wreck, but when he saw that the crew had left and that it was impossible for him to tow the vessel off the rocks on account of the rough sea, he resumed his voyage, leaving the *Spondilus* in a very critical condition with her stern low in the water and her stem high out of the water. Before reaching Cape Varela the first officer while on watch saw a mattress and some blankets floating in the water, and later he saw several pieces of wood. He remarked to the captain that there had evidently been a wreck, and a sharp look out was consequently kept. It is satisfactory to learn, however, that the crew of the *Spondilus* have arrived at Singapore. The steamer *Germania*, which arrived from Saigon on the 11th March, saw them picked up by the P. & O. steamer *Borneo*, and telegraphic advice of their arrival at Singapore has been received.

THE LOSS OF THE "HUMBER."

The crew of the steamer *Humber*, which was wrecked on Sand Island on the 1st inst., arrived in Hongkong by the *Hailoong* from Amoy. At the time of the accident the *Humber* was on her way from Yokohama to Fiume, Austria, with a cargo of rice. She left Yokohama on the 27th February, and the weather was throughout very thick and observations could not be taken. On the morning of the 1st inst. a dense fog was encountered and about seven o'clock the vessel struck a rock on Sand Island and a huge hole was made in her bottom. Water rushed into the hold and in a very few minutes it contained fourteen feet of water. The crew put off in boats and went to Fisher Island and then to Makung Harbour. The crew waited here five or six days, when they were taken on board H.M.S. *Plover* and conveyed to Amoy, where they transferred to the *Hailoong*. Before leaving Amoy an official inquiry was held respecting the loss of the ship, which became a total wreck in two days, and the captain and officers were exonerated from all blame.

THE DISPOSAL OF THE BODIES OF PLAGUE VICTIMS.

Some gruesome tales are in circulation with reference to the occasional disposal of the bodies of persons who have died of plague. The following appear to be authentic. Last Sunday week a box, carefully matted, was put on board a steamer at Hongkong, the contents being declared as sharkfins. On arrival at Canton a female passenger claimed it and declared the contents to be her dead son, a boy of thirteen or fourteen, a victim of the plague. The box was of course released at once and the Customs made no difficulty about its removal without going through the form of examining the contents. On the previous Saturday the contents of a new camphorwood box taken on board another steamer by a passenger were found to be a dead man, another victim of the plague. In this case, it is said, the man was alive when put in the box. After the steamer left the wharf the box was opened, but the man was then dead. On arrival at Canton an inquisitive and not easily satisfied Customs officer examined the box and found the contents to be a dead man as stated. In both these cases there is little doubt the box and case will be used again to pack clothes or goods in, and may form a deadly instrument in spreading the plague.

A mint for the coinage of silver dollars is to be established soon in the province of Chekiang.

We hear that another case arrived at Canton a few days ago from Hongkong which on being opened was found to contain the corpse of a plague victim.

Mr. Den Kenjiro, chief of the Communications Bureau, was to leave Tokyo for Europe on the 3rd March to attend the International Telegraph Conference.

THE REPORTED TROUBLE AT CANTON.

Reports recently appeared in one of the Shanghai papers of an intended rising at Canton, which, however, failed to eventuate. We now hear—and this may perhaps explain the origin of the Shanghai rumour—that about China New Year time letters were sent to the French and American Consuls at Canton warning them that there was going to be trouble and that they had better get gunboats up. An English and a German gunboat were already at Canton at the time. One letter is said to have been written by hand, while the other was type written, the latter being headed "Beware, Beware, Beware." The letters were sent from Hongkong and professed to be written by a Chinaman recently returned from a visit to Canton. Whether the affair was intended as a hoax, or whether the writer was an agent of the Canton Government who took this method of securing the presence of foreign war-vessels, or the letters had some other motive will probably never be known. However, they were the only indication of trouble and apparently were not thought worthy of much consideration. So far all seems quiet and likely to remain so. The only quarter in which there appears to be the faintest suggestion of disturbance is in connection with the clearing of the Shameen Canal. It is said the shops along the Canal Road facing Shameen, although they have no right whatever to do so, lease their frontages to the boats lying in the canal and that they are now instigating the boatpeople to resist being moved. The officials seem half-hearted about tackling the work, and this may have had something to do with the letters above mentioned. It has been decided to dig out the canal in sections and only the boats in one section at a time are to be moved.

MARINE OF COURT INQUIRY.

VAGUE CHARGES AGAINST A SECOND OFFICER.

On the 16th March a Marine Court of Inquiry was held at the Harbour Master's office to investigate certain charges of misconduct brought against P. J. Donovan, second mate of the British steamship *Chittagong*, official number 86,878, of London, by Oliver Davey, master of the vessel.

The Court was constituted as follows—Hon. Commander R. Murray Rumsey, R.N. (Stipendiary Magistrate), Commander Keppelwade, H.M.S. *Centurion*, Mr. G. A. Lee, master of the British steamship *Empress of Japan*, Mr. J. Spence, master of the British steamship *Lightning*, and Mr. H. A. Motyer, master of the British steamship *Anjer Head*.

Mr. Dennis represented the second mate.

The captain's letter applying for the appointment of a Court was read.

Captain Davey said—I am master of the British steamship *Chittagong*. The second mate has been on the articles of the ship since 14th January, 1895. On the return voyage from America in July last year—

The Stipendiary Magistrate—Do you wish to go back as far as that?

Witness—Yes. On the 10th July the defendant was put off duty because he was insolent to me on the bridge.

The Stipendiary Magistrate—You must not expect the Court to come here and hear generalities like that; you must go into details. Did you make an entry in the log?

Witness—Yes. (Log produced). On the 21st February last he refused to perform his duty. On the 12th February I asked him if he had secured some dunnage and he said it ought to have been done long ago, besides using other insolent language.

The Stipendiary Magistrate—You have brought a charge against the second mate and you have not given details. You cannot expect people who are not acquainted with the circumstances to form any opinion simply on what you have told us now. We do not know anything at all about the circumstances. Do you propose to go into more details about the charges?

Witness—The insolence was continuous throughout the voyage.

The President—Yes, but what you in your position as captain might consider as insolent might

not mean insolence—I do not say this is the case, but it might be—it might not mean insolence that we should be called upon to deal with. Do you wish to go further?

Witness—No.

The President—Very well.

No further questions were asked by the Court.

Mr. Dennys—You offered to discharge the defendant, did you not?

Witness—Yes.

Mr. Dennys—He declined to take his discharge?

Witness—I told him I would pay him off, but he said he did not wish to leave the ship.

Mr. Dennys—It was after his saying that that you asked for this Court?

Witness—That was some time ago—in May last year.

Mr. Dennys—Haven't you offered him his discharge recently?

Witness—No.

Mr. Dennys—Are the owners or any of the agents in this part of the world?

Witness—Only the general agents.

Mr. Dennys—Who are the owners?

Witness—Caulfield and Co., Cardiff.

Mr. Dennys—What has been the reason for your disliking the defendant?

Witness—I never disliked him at all; there is no personal dislike.

Mr. Dennys—Haven't you told him he is nobody on board the ship and that he must not consider himself anybody because he happens to be friendly with the owners?

Witness—No.

Mr. Dennys—He brought the ship down from Bristol to Cardiff?

Witness—I brought the ship down with the pilot.

Mr. Dennys—He helped to take the ship down?

Witness—Yes.

Mr. Dennys—He brought you a letter from the owners?

Witness—Yes, he said he was joining the ship.

Mr. Dennys—You have no personal dislike for him, but you want to get him off the ship?

Witness—Yes.

In answer to further questions witness said that the second officer stowed the Dunnage in the after hatch.

Mr. Dennys—Where were you going on the 10th July?

Witness—From Portland, Oregon, to Hongkong. We arrived here in August.

Mr. Dennys—You brought no charge against the second officer then?

Witness—I made a complaint to the shipping master.

Mr. Dennys—You made a complaint and asked for an investigation?

Witness—I gave in my official log.

Mr. Dennys—Did you ask for an investigation?

Witness—Yes.

Mr. Dennys—It was refused?

Witness—No; I found I had not time to have an investigation.

Commander Kippelwade—How long were you here in August?

Witness—Seven days. We arrived one Sunday and left on the following Sunday.

William Hughes said—I am chief officer of the *Chittagong*. I remember the 10th July last year. The ship was on a voyage from Portland, Oregon, to Hongkong. At six p.m. the captain was on the bridge and the second officer was down the fore deck. I was in my room. I thought I heard the captain ask the second mate what he was doing. I did not hear what the captain said. I heard the second mate answer, but I do not know what he said. That is all I know about it. I remember that the captain ordered the second officer to his room. An entry was made in the log. I knew the second officer had a copy of the entry because the captain told me. I have heard from the captain about the second officer's conduct on the 12th February. I was not on deck at the time.

Mr. Dennys—I must ask the Court not to take that because of course it is not evidence.

The President—We will take it for what it is worth.

Witness, continuing—I know that an entry was made in the log, and that the second officer had a copy of the entry. I know that, because the captain told me.

The President—I may as well tell you that in an inquiry by any Court where charges have to be investigated one of the first principles of evidence is that it is no good a man coming and saying what somebody else told him unless the third party was present. It is not worth the trouble of writing it down. In this case the captain told you he had served a copy of the entry on the second officer. It is very likely that was so, but the fact is not proved. If the second officer said he did not receive a copy and the captain said he did, where are you? You cannot go further.

Captain Davey—I have not on many occasions had a great deal of insolence from the second officer?

Witness—Yes, very often. In February last year at Batoum—

The President—Well, let us have more modern history if possible.

Witness—On arriving in Hongkong last May I ordered the defendant to get the wires ready to moor ship. He replied by jumping on the deck and throwing his arms about. He refused to stay on board and said that nobody could stop him. On the 15th May he gave me mere insolence and abused me.

Captain Davey—Has he offered to fight you on several occasions?

Witness—Yes, in Batoum—

The President—Oh, don't take us back to Batoum again.

Witness—Well in Saigon he threatened to smash me up.

Captain Davey—Didn't he refuse to do some duty you told him to perform?

Witness—About three weeks ago I told him to superintend the working of the timbers. He told me to do it myself. I said I should report him. About two hours afterwards he asked me if I had reported him, and I said "No." I afterwards reported him.

The President—Can you give the Court little more definite evidence about the abusive language? Don't be afraid of shocking our feelings. Let's have some of it. "Abusive language" is a very general term, you know.

Witness—He was very abusive in Portland.

The President—Let us hear some of the language.

Witness—When he was ordered to clear up the decks at seven a.m. he used abusive language.

The President—What sort of language?

Witness—He called me all the skunks—

The President—Let us hear details.

Witness—I went to his room and called him and he came on deck and abused me.

The President—Did you say anything to him?

Witness—No.

The President—Do you mean to say he went on deck and abused you without rhyme or reason?

Witness—Yes.

The President—There must be have been some reason, surely.

Witness—he was vexed at being called so early. I cannot remember all he said. He called me names.

The President—What names?

Witness—Skauk and I don't know what.

The President—if you don't know what how do you know they were bad names?

Witness—They were bad names, but I would not like to repeat them.

The President—Oh, don't be afraid.

Witness—he called me all the—skunks and sly skunks.

The President—Do you mean to say he said—skunk for no reason at all?

Witness—I did not do anything.

The President—Is that the way he frequently goes on?

Witness—Yes.

The President—When was the last time?

Witness—In Saigon, three weeks ago. He said the donkeyman was not a fit man to keep watch and I said that was my business. He then commenced calling me names and said he was going to smash me.

The President—Now you are going into generalities again. When did he call you?

Witness—He said "I will smash you" and then walked away and I heard no more from him.

By Mr. Dennys—At Portland defendant

refused to clear the deck when I ordered him. I signed the entries in the log because the captain asked me. The entries were written by the captain himself. I am not on good terms with the second officer. I do not know the reason of his abusing me. As far as I know he is a sober man, and I believe he knows his duty.

Mr. Dennys—Now what is your reason for trying to get him off the ship?

Witness—Would you like to be abused like a blackguard for the past ten months like I have been?

Mr. Dennys—Is that your reason?

Witness—He has always been abusing me and working against me.

Henry Simon, the carpenter, was called.

The President—What nationality are you?

Witness—I was born in Russia and married in England. (Laughter). I have been in the *Chittagong* six months. On the 10th July the second officer gave "cheek" to the captain. I was not on deck at the time, but I was in my room. I could not hear what they said. I signed the entry in the log. I cannot remember what it said, but it was true. I know it was true because I heard the second officer give "cheek."

The President—What was the "cheek?"

Witness—It was very bad language; shall I tell you what it was? It was very bad.

The President—Oh yes. We must hear these things sometimes. It goes against the grain very much, but we must hear the language sometimes.

Witness—I can't remember what it was. I heard that it was bad language, I know.

Witness, continuing, said the second mate left the bridge on the 10th July to look after the damage. Witness did not hear what took place between the captain and the second mate. At Portland the second mate was going ashore before the ship was secured. He once said something like "Damn you" to the first mate.

By Mr. Dennys—Witness could not remember what bad language the second mate had used.

James Wilson, chief engineer, said he had heard the second mate use abusive language to the first mate, and William Bonting, the donkeyman, gave similar evidence.

Mr. Dennys addressed the Court and called attention to the fact that the second mate had been at sea thirty-three years, and his certificate proved him to be a man of excellent character. The charge against him was a poultry one.

Defendant said—I am a native of Cork. Whenever I went ashore I had the master's permission. Each time I went on shore I got money and leave from the captain. I have never retaliated when the chief officer has spoken to me. We had a dispute once about the position of some casks. I have not abused the captain. When the first mate told me about the Dunnage I said my proper place was on the bridge. I afterwards went and secured the Dunnage and got hurt.

The following was the finding of the Court—

We have carefully considered the evidence before the Court in the presence of the accused as well as his statement in defence. We are

of opinion that the evidence is too vague and general in its terms to sustain a charge of gross misconduct on the part of the second officer,

Mr. Donovan, and the Court therefore does not deal with his certificate. We are however, of

opinion that his conduct has been highly unbecoming in his position as second mate of the *Chittagong*, and consider that in the best interests of all concerned it is necessary that he should be discharged from the ship, and we therefore order his discharge accordingly.

THE POLICE REPORT FOR 1895.

The report of Captain Hastings, Acting Captain Superintendent of Police, was laid before the Legislative Council on the 10th March. It is as follows, a few tables being omitted:

The statistics show an increase as compared with the return of last year of 54.85 per cent. in the total of all cases reported to the Police. In

the sub-divisions of these cases into serious and minor offences there appears an increase as compared with last year of 7.45 per cent. in the former, and of 74.11 in the latter category. The reason for this increase in serious crime is probably to be found in the fact that during at least

three months of 1894 during the epidemic the town was largely depopulated of its Chinese population, in which doubtless many of the thieving class as well as their prey were absent. This idea is strengthened by a comparison of 1895 with 1893, which was a normal year as to population. This comparison shows an increase of only 1.54 per cent. in 1895 over 1893. The increase in minor offences is largely due to miscellaneous offences which may be classed as offences against sanitary arrangements, good order in streets, and kindred offences, while the enforcement of the Light and Pass Ordinance is responsible for 2,005 more cases than in 1894.

Three murders came under notice of the Police in 1895:

1.—On the 14th February about 9 p.m. Havildar Umraz Khan, Hongkong Regiment, was shot near the camp and died the next morning. His supposed assailant Private Nanal Shah was arrested on the statement of the wounded man, but no other evidence was obtainable and the man was discharged at the Police Court.

2.—On the 18th February a quarrel took place in a boat lying off Bonham Strand between four Chinese boatmen. Two were wounded and sent to hospital; one of these men Siug Sheung Li died from the effects of his wounds on the 27th February.

3.—John Gunderson, seaman, belonging to the Geo. F. Manson, sailing ship, was reported missing from his vessel on the 6th October and was subsequently found murdered on Cowee Chau Island. Two boat people, a man and his wife (in whose boat Gunderson is said to have been), were arrested and charged with the murder, but were discharged for want of evidence at the October Sessions.

HIGHWAY ROBBERIES.

On the 19th January a man was stopped, pepper thrown in his eyes by three men (one armed with a knife), on the Shaukiwan Road between Bay View and North Point, and money stolen from him to the amount of \$370.

On the 24th January a man was stopped on the Magazine Gap Road by three men, one of whom was armed with a knife and who robbed him of clothing and money value \$14.

On the 5th February a woman while crossing the Military Rifle Range was assaulted and robbed of ten silver dollars by two men.

On the 16th July a man was stopped on the Shaukiwan Road and robbed of five dollars by two men.

On the 9th September a boy was thrown down by another on the Bonham Road and robbed of a bangle valued at \$6.

On the 1st October two men stopped another on the Morrison Hill Road, threw tobacco dust in his face, and robbed him of \$20.

GANG ROBBERIES.

On the 18th November about 6.30 p.m., three men armed with revolvers entered No. 106, Praya West, overawed the shop people and stole a silver watch value \$5.

On the 22nd November at 9.30 p.m., three men armed with revolvers entered No. 124, Wellington Street (raw opium shop) and similarly robbed the people, stealing notes and silver value \$900.

STREET ROBBERIES.

On the 30th December, 1894, a man was drugged and robbed of \$20 by gamblers in Third Street. His report was considered doubtful, as he had been gambling.

About midnight, the 3rd and 4th January, a man boarded a boat in Yaumati Harbour, seized a woman by the throat and stole from the boat some jewellery. Four men were concerned.

On the 3rd July two men threw pepper in the eyes of another in Queen's Road West and robbed him of a bundle of clothing value \$2.

On the 12th July a man was robbed of his purse containing 35 cents by three men in Queen's Road Central.

On the 15th August a man was pushed down in Fat Hing Street by three men, who robbed him of \$7.25.

Two cases, included in the Returns as Felonies not already given, occurred in Manila and were sent here by the Consular Authorities to be tried.

4 Europeans, attempted murder, April sessions, ship *Laenburga*. Convicted.

1 European, manslaughter, June sessions, ship *Esther Boy*. Convicted.

Value of property reported stolen during the year \$57,559.

Recovered by the Police and restored to owners, \$12,049.

Articles reported lost 132, valued at \$2,752.

Articles found 63, valued at \$736.

Articles found claimed by owners 32.

The coal and cargo coolies struck on the 23rd March in consequence of the enforcement from the 1st January of the by-laws for the licensing and registration of common lodging-houses under the Public Health Ordinance.

Every endeavour had been made by the Registrar-General to explain the by-laws, not only personally to the keepers of the houses but also by the circulation of 3,000 printed translations of the by-laws.

On the 20th March, twenty-seven of the principal lodging-house keepers were afforded another opportunity to conform to the by-laws, by the Acting President of the Sanitary Board, who desired them to attend at his office. Not one attended and they were all summoned.

On the 22nd only one keeper answered to his summons at the Magistracy.

Warrants were issued for the other 26, search was made for them, but they had absconded.

The Police were strengthened and picquets patrolled the streets as well as the harbour in pinnaces.

On the 23rd on the arrival of the Macao steamer the only attempt at a disturbance took place. A number of stevedore coolies on strike endeavoured to interfere with the coolies who attended regularly to carry baggage and goods ashore.

The Police had no difficulty in dispersing the crowd, and two men were arrested (by Chinese constables), convicted, and fined \$15 each or six weeks' hard labour.

By the evening 3,000 coolies were on strike.

On the 24th the whole of the coal coolies joined the strikers.

On the 25th fifty convicts coaled the steamer *Feronia* and 100 men of the Rifle Brigade discharged the steamer *Pekin*.

The 200 Swatow coolies of the Kowloon Go-down Company did not strike, being protected by a guard of the Hongkong Regiment, who guarded the wharves till the end of the strike.

There was an arrest for intimidation this day, the 25th, in Victoria, the prisoner being convicted and sentenced to three months' hard labour.

The hands in the Quarry Bay Refinery struck work.

On the 25th and 26th several steamers went round to Aberdeen and discharged cargo there, the coolies being guarded by Police in launches afloat and by patrols on the roads.

On the 26th the cargo boatmen endeavoured to strike, but on being warned by the Police that they could not leave the waters of the colony without a clearance, and their securities being dealt with by the Registrar-General, remained passive, though private individuals could only hire them through the Police.

The hands at the Lee Yuen Refinery struck work.

On the 27th a dépôt of cargo boats was formed by the Water Police, to save time in hiring them.

The coolies working at Aberdeen struck this day.

There were now 20,000 coolies on strike.

Six petty officers of the Navy were sworn in as special constables to do duty with the Water Police.

Men of the Hongkong Regiment were engaged discharging vessels.

On the 28th the Police hired 50 coolies for a local firm at \$1 a day, but the firm subsequently declined to pay such large wages, fearing to prejudice future rates.

This day the hands at Hung-hom Docks began to be restless; two strangers, doubtless emissaries from the strikers, were, however, arrested and sentenced to three months' hard labour as rogues and vagabonds, and the Deck hands gave no more trouble.

The remaining hands at East Point Refinery struck.

On the 1st April the Police secured 350 coolies at \$1 a day for various firms.

On the 2nd over 500 coolies were supplied to various firms.

On the 2nd the Brigadier in charge at Chinese Kowloon drove away the head coolies.

On the 3rd the Police engaged 1,000 coolies at 75 cents a day for employers of labour.

At noon on the 4th the strike was at an end. A picquet from the Rifle Brigade did duty at Quarry Bay, from the 26th March till the end of the strike.

During the strike from the 25th March till 4th April inclusive 2,622 men of the Rifle Brigade, 1,860 men of the Hongkong Regiment, and 189 officers and non-commissioned officers of both regiments did duty guarding workmen and discharging ships.

562 convicts coaled and discharged vessels and 632 blue jackets and marines rendered valuable services coaling.

The special constables (Petty Officers R.N.) performed their duties very satisfactorily, and conducted themselves in a most exemplary manner.

The Police of all ranks and nationalities displayed much energy, discretion, and good temper during the strike.

Inspectors Stanton and Hennessy rendered most valuable services in hiring coolies and cargo boats respectively.

Fifty-five offenders were arrested during the strike, and punishments inflicted varying from three months' hard labour to \$1 or seven days' hard labour.

On the 28th March Police Sergeant McIver was appointed as temporary Sanitary Inspector, and detailed for the special duty of collecting evidence for prosecuting the keepers of unregistered lodging-houses.

Between that date and 31st May 454 houses were visited, on an average four times each.

The keepers of 115 houses registered, 66 did not contain sufficient occupants to come within the definition of a common lodging-house.

273 keepers were summoned for failing to register.

65 failed to appear, and warrants were issued.

32 were subsequently arrested.

33 closed their houses.

240 keepers were convicted, and fines aggregating \$1,516.75 imposed.

47 keepers were recommended for banishment.

12 were banished, the remainder having found security for good behaviour were not banished.

LICENCES.

Jinricksha licences have been granted only to builders and repairers' shops, with a view to the elimination of middlemen or farmers of licences.

Licensees have been required to sign an undertaking that they will not charge their drawers more than 33 cents a day each in the summer, and 30 cents a day each in the winter months.

There are two drawers to each jinricksha. All licensed bearers of public chairs and drawers of jinrickshas have been medically examined as to their fitness for their occupation; about 5 per cent. were rejected. Licensed marine store dealers have increased from 5 to 30; fines aggregating \$1,000 having been imposed on the unlicensed store dealers.

Dogs.—1,580 dogs were licensed, 99 destroyed, 20 restored to their owners, 6 ransomed.

Vehicles.—Private vehicles licensed.—588 vehicles for trade were licensed, 10 for private use, 17 for livery.

ARMS.

2,813 export permits under Ordinance 8 of 1895 were taken out for the export of—

Revolvers	10,310
Muskets	1,836
Repeating rifles	3,960
Swords	32
Pistols	6,185
Cartridges	1,544,393
Caps	108,423 boxes
Iron Gun	1
Lead shots	1,115 lbs.
Double barrelled guns	87
Carbines	320
Fowling pieces	29
Bullets	149,859
Gunpowder	1,052 lbs.
Blank cartridges	60
Fuses	255 pieces.
Dynamite	300 lbs.
Iron cannons	7

MENDICANTS.

In addition to the 250 beggars sent up to the Police Court 477 have been summarily deported to Kowloon City and Canton.

PLAQUE.

The precautions adopted for the prevention of plague have already been fully reported on elsewhere.

1 European Sergeant, 7 European Police Constables, and 16 Chinese Constables were engaged on house to house visitation duty from the 1st to 31st May inclusive, 3 European Police Constables and 12 Chinese Constables from 1st June to 15th June inclusive, 1 European Police Constable and 4 Chinese Constables from the 16th June to 31st July inclusive. On duty at the Tung Wah Hospital from the 1st May to the 17th July 3 Indian and 3 Chinese Constables.

From the 17th May to 31st July inclusive Inspector Quincey and a party of detectives nightly tracked the passengers from the river steamers to their lodgings, with a view of ascertaining if plague was being imported.

There were no complaints against the Police.

LIGHT AND PASS ORDINANCE.

The provisions of the Light and Pass Ordinance were enforced from the 23rd November (when notices were issued in the Chinese papers) till the end of the year. The regulation requiring the carrying of a light after 7 p.m. was also adhered to, the result being an almost abrupt termination of all descriptions of offences after night-fall.

Comparing the period between the 25th November, 1894, and the 21st December of the same year with the corresponding period of 1895, exclusive of Light and Pass offences, there were 323 fewer cases in the Police Court in 1895.

During the same period there were 8 fewer burglaries reported, viz., 9 in 1894 and 1 in 1895, and 88 few cases of larceny.

During the period under review there were 1,450 arrests for breaches of the Light and Pass sections of the Ordinance, of whom 51 were women, amongst that number there being 33 blind singing girls, miserable creatures who belong to the lowest class of prostitutes.

Trade was safeguarded by arranging that head men with passes and lights should accompany their gangs of coal or cargo coolies to and from their lodging-houses.

A great deal of work was thrown on the Police Office as also on that of the Registrar-General, the number of quarterly night passes rising rapidly to over 13,000; it has since risen to 15,000 and annual passes, I believe, to nearly 800.

STRENGTH OF THE FORCE.

The average strength of the Police Force during the year 1895 has been 558, its greatest strength, in February, 590, and its least in August 535. In December it was 541. Exclusive of men on leave, the European force has been on an average 6 men short, and the Indian contingent 40. In December the latter was 53 below strength and the Europeans 7 the total of all ranks being 541.

To endeavour to some extent to supplement the Indians 30 temporary Chinese Constables were engaged, but the substitute has been a very feeble one.

Several Europeans were engaged locally, but save for the Water Police the practice is not fruitful of success.

The men are not trained Constables (whereas the recruits from the United Kingdom are).

During their probationary period they are merely learners, not available for street duty and frequently at the expiration of the three months they have found more suitable or remunerative employment. One result of the failure to recruit Indians has been that they have had no leave and it has been not unnaturally a source of considerable dissatisfaction, several good men having resigned.

Ten Europeans from the Metropolitan Police Force arrived in March last and have given every satisfaction.

One man committed suicide by cutting his throat a fortnight after arrival.

In connection with the reduction of the Police Force, a table is attached hereto, showing the ratio of increase in certain towns in the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Shanghai compiled from returns received last year, from

which it will be seen that Hongkong is the only place that reduces its Police as the population increases, nor does the situation of the colony, the mixed character of its population and Police Force appear to place it in any more favourable position for adopting such a course than the other places given in the table.

CONDUCT.

The conduct of the European Police has again been satisfactory, as has also been that of the Indian contingent.

Offences amongst the Chinese Police have been mainly the outcome of their inability to conform to discipline. The serious offence of being asleep on duty has decreased all round.

The number of reports made against European members of the Force was 48 against 74 last year.

Of these 8 were for drunkenness as against 10 in the previous 12 months, 4 for disorderly conduct, assaults and fighting, and 3 for sitting down on duty, as against 3 and 3 respectively, 5 for neglect of duty and 5 for asleep on duty, as against 12 and 10 in the previous year.

Against men of the Indian contingent there were 162 reports as against 214 in 1894.

Of these 12 were for drunkenness, as against 18 in 1894, 11 for disorderly conduct, assault and fighting, as against 25, 15 for neglect of duty, as against 41, 22 for absence from duty, or beat and late for duty, as against 17, 33 for gossiping, sitting down and idling on duty, as against 39, 9 for asleep on duty, as against 15, and 7 for leaving beat before being relieved, as against 5.

Amongst Chinese Constables there were 512 reports as against 397 in 1894.

It should be noted in this connection that the Chinese Force was increased throughout the year by 80 men, to make up for 40 deficiencies in the Indian contingent.

There was 1 case of drunkenness in the Chinese Force as against 2 in 1894, in other respects increases are noted, as 203 reports for absence from duty or beat, and late for duty, against 161, and 41 for leaving beat before being relieved, against 6 the previous year.

There was a decrease from 48 to 44 for asleep on duty.

1 Indian Constable was convicted before a Magistrate and fined \$10 for neglect of duty.

1 Chinese Constable was fined \$5 for using disrespectful language in Court, and one was fined \$5 for being in possession of prepared opium.

HEALTH.

The health of the Force has been satisfactory. The admissions to Hospital were, compared with last year, as follows:-

	1894.	1895.
Europeans	127	81
Indians	244	233
Chinese	134	113

CHINA SUGAR REFINING CO., LIMITED

The following is the report for presentation to the shareholders at the eighteenth annual general meeting, to be held at the offices of the General Agents on 27th March:-

The General Agents beg to submit to the shareholders their report on the Company's business for the year 1895, with a statement of accounts to 31st of December last.

The depression, which, in consequence of over production, existed during the latter part of the year 1894 in the sugar trade of the world, continued during the succeeding twelve months, and as supplies everywhere in the East exceeded demand, the value of sugar remained at a very low level.

This level being unfortunately much below the prices ruling when some of the Company's stocks of Java raw sugar were contracted for the usual margin on refining did not exist and it was impossible during several months to sell in the principal consuming markets except at a loss. The laying down cost of a considerable portion of the raw sugar was also adversely affected by the fall in sterling exchange in the early part of the year.

The usual demand for the Refinery's sugar locally was interfered with by the war between China and Japan, and in the latter country by sales at very low prices of beet sugar imported from Europe.

The dry weather during the spring curtailed the water supply at the works, causing a large reduction in the output and involving heavy loss of interest owing to the accumulation of stocks of raw sugar.

Under these circumstances the business of the year unfortunately resulted in the substantial loss of \$244,332.45 shown by the annexed accounts, after allowance had been made for a sum of \$50,000 conceded by the General Agents.

WATER SUPPLY.

In view of the unfavourable prospects of the year, and consequent necessity for curtailing expenditure as much as possible, the General Agents and Consulting Committee decided in July last to suspend operations for the time being upon the Soukumboo scheme, but other arrangements have been made which will give a sufficient supply of water for the present requirements of the two Refineries. The expenditure in the above connection will, it is estimated, not exceed \$22,500, and as the amount standing at credit of new water supply in the statement of accounts dated 5th of March last was \$162,500, there will remain a sum for disposal of \$140,000, which, with the consent of the shareholders, the General Agents and Consulting Committee propose to write back to credit of profit and loss account.

CONSULTING COMMITTEE.

Mr. C. S. Sharp was invited to join the Consulting Committee on the departure of Mr. A. G. Wood from the colony.

The members of the Committee offer themselves for re-election.

AUDITORS.

The accounts have been audited by Messrs. Thos. Arnould and Fullerton Henderson, who offer themselves for re-election.

JARDINE, MATHESON & CO.,
General Agents.

Hongkong, 13th March, 1896.

BALANCE SHEET—ONE YEAR—TO 31ST DECEMBER,

1895.

CAPITAL ACCOUNT.	\$ c.
Paid-up capital	2,000,000.00
New water supply	160,507.70
Sundry creditors	2,631,139.00
	<hr/>
	\$4,791,647.60

ASSETS.

Property account, consisting of—	
East Point refinery	
Bowrington refinery	1,619,189.21
Swatow refinery	
Hongkong distillery	
Site at Soukumboo	
Cash	652.76
Raw and refined sugar	1,025,907.02
Spirits and rum, &c.	9,466.20
Charcoal, coals, stores, fire insurance, &c.	335,826.55
Sundry debtors	112,584.77
Shipments	\$1,863,899.53
Less advance	420,210.39
	1,443,688.64
	<hr/>
Balance of profit and loss account	4,547,315.15
	244,332.45
	<hr/>
	\$4,791,647.60

PROPERTY ACCOUNT.

To balance at debit on 31st December, 1894	\$1,617,759.21
To new machinery	1,430.00
	<hr/>
	\$1,619,189.21

By balance at date	\$1,619,189.21
	<hr/>
	\$1,619,189.21

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

Dr.	\$ c.
To commission	20,321.89
To remuneration to Consulting Committee	2,500.00
To auditors' fees	500.00
To interest account	87,453.34
To loss on working	145,097.34
	<hr/>
	\$255,872.57

Cr.	\$ c.
By amount carried from last year	11,540.12
31st Dec.	
By balance	244,332.43
	<hr/>
	\$265,872.57

Jinrickshas plying for hire on the new "Maloo" at Nankin, recently constructed by order of the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, are required to pay a licence fee of \$1 per vehicle per month. Already there have been many licences applied for, and it is evident that the road promises to be well patronised.—Mercury.

GEO. FENWICK & CO., LIMITED.

The following is the report of the General Manager for presentation to the general meeting to be held on the 19th March:—

The General Manager begs to submit to the shareholders a statement of accounts showing the result of the Company's working for the seventh year ending 31st December, 1895.

The net profit for the past year amounts to \$23,745.28, to which has to be added \$12,194.73 brought forward from last year's account. From this amount it is proposed to pay a dividend of ten per cent., or \$15,000, to shareholders, auditor's fee \$150, consulting committee \$300, place \$4,000 to reserve, and carry forward the balance of \$16,490.1 to next year's account.

CONSULTING COMMITTEE.

Messrs Parlane and Rodger are eligible for re-election.

AUDITOR.

The accounts have been audited by Mr. T. Arnold, who offers himself for re-election.

GEO. FENWICK, General Manager.
Hongkong, 12th March, 1896.

DECEMBER 31ST, 1895.

ASSETS.	\$	c
Value of land and buildings thereon as per last statement	892,867.50	
Added during the year (new building)	1,826.99	
	894,694.49	
Less amount written off for depreciation	694.49	
	84,000.00	
Value of plant and office furniture as per last statement	286,320.78	
Added during the year	2,855.11	
	29,175.89	
Less amount transferred to stock account	84,000.00	
Amount written off for depreciation	2,247.34	
	6,247.34	
Value of stock in trade	22,928.55	
Work in progress	44,625.98	
Unexpired fire insurance	8,004.21	
Current account with the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation	114.23	
Cash in hand	18,508.70	
Sundry debtors	79.75	
	10,450.78	
	\$198,712.20	

LIABILITIES.

	\$	c
Amount of capital, 8,000 shares at \$25 each, fully paid-up	150,000.00	
Reserve fund	1,000.00	
Amount received in advance on account of contracts in hand	11,670.89	
Sundry creditors	101.30	
Balance of profit and loss account	35,940.01	
	\$198,712.20	

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT, 31ST DECEMBER, 1895.

To cost of labour, material, and working expenses	\$ 65,924.79
To office and manager's salaries	9,678.50
To fire insurance	169.21
To Crown rent and taxe	1,084.53
To amount written off plant account	2,247.34
To amount written off property account	694.49
To amount of bad debts written off	40.97
To old dividend, previously written off, claimed	17.75
To balance to be appropriated, viz.:—	
Add to reserve fund	\$ 4,000.00
Dividend of 10 per cent. on \$150,000	15,000.00
Auditor's fee	150.00
Consulting Committee's fees	300.00
Balance to be carried to new account	16,490.01
	35,940.01

By amount brought forward from last year's account

12,194.73

By gross earnings

103,505.68

By transfer fees

20.00

By interest account

70.07

By bonus from insurance company

2.11

By profit on exchange

5.00

\$115,797.59

The *Shanghai Mercury* of the 9th March says:—The first fleet of the Chinese Government rice transports, junks, to the number of 89, with a total load of 16,468 shih (25,702 piculs) of tribute rice is under despatch for Tientsin and will sail in a few days.

SHANGHAI AND HONGKEW WHARF COMPANY.

The following is the report of the directors for the year ended 31st December, 1895, to be submitted to the annual general meeting to be held at Shanghai on the 18th instant:

The directors beg to submit to the shareholders the annual statement of accounts for 1895.

After payment of an *ad interim* dividend of Tls. 8 per share on the 12th August last, the profit and loss account shows a credit balance (including Tls. 12,027.30 brought forward from 1894) of Tls. 51,673.28, which it is proposed to divide among the holders of the 8,001 new shares of the Company, representing the above mentioned 2,867 shares—Tls. 18 per old share.

The repairs mentioned in last year's report as being necessary to the Pootung Wharf and Tungkadoo Wharf have been completed and paid for out of revenue.

Consequent on the sale of part of the Ningpo Wharf premises Tls. 30,000 of debentures were purchased on the market and cancelled.

At the beginning of November Mr. A. Korff, on the invitation of the directors, joined the Board.

In terms of the resolutions passed at the extraordinary general meeting of the shareholders held on 11th November, the directors have completed the purchase of Messrs Jardine, Matheson & Co.'s interest in the Wharves, the revised deed of settlement has been printed and three shares of the face value of Tls. 100 each share previously held have been placed to the credit of shareholders in the register as on 1st January, 1896.

Mr. Burnman having gone home, the directors appointed Mr. C. W. Wrightson to audit the books in conjunction with Mr. Wingrove.

The present directors and auditors offer themselves for re-election.

JARDINE, MATHESON & CO.
General Agents.

DR. RENNIE ON THE PLAGUE AT CANTON.

Dr. Alexander Rennie, who was the Customs Medical Officer at Canton at the time of the plague, has written an interesting report upon the epidemic for the Customs Medical Reports, from which we make the following extracts:—

In China little or nothing had been heard of the plague since its prevalence at Pakhoi in 1882, so that its appearance at Canton in March, 1894, was somewhat unexpected. Europeans, by the ravages of centuries, were rendered painfully familiar with the disease; but to them all interest ceased on its disappearance from Europe in 1841, and in 1844 from Egypt—its home for over twenty centuries. Several years passed, and epidemiologists were beginning to believe the virus was extinct and the plague a thing of the past when attention was directed to an outbreak in Asyr, Western Arabia, 1853; followed by outbreaks in Bengazi, North Africa, 1858; Persian Kurdistan, 1863; the banks of the Euphrates, south and west of Hillah, 1867 and 1873; extending as far north as Bagdad, 1876, and over the country lying between the Tigris and the Syrian desert. It now appeared in south-eastern Persia and gradually extended northwards to the southern shore of the Caspian Sea; and in 1878 broke out in the province of Astrakan, Lower Volga, thus reappearing on European soil after an absence of thirty-seven years. It would thus appear that, though often seemingly quiescent, the plague has never really been extinct; and now, brought face to face with its presence in Southern China and Hongkong, menacing as it does commercial intercourse with the West, we must realise that the outbreak is fraught with danger.

The presence of the plague in the Chinese Empire does not seem to have been brought to notice until the outbreak in 1871, at P'u-erh, in Yunnan, during the great Mahomedan rebellion. With its subsequent progress in that province we have been made familiar by the notes of Mr. E. Rocher and travellers such as Baber and Bourne, and also by the French missionaries, who have on one or two occasions been attacked by the disease. From the observations of these men we learn that the plague is endemic in Yunnan, prevailing

annually from March to July, the summer heat being evidently adverse to its progress. Its severe epidemic violence in 1871-73 was doubtless accentuated by the misery and privation attendant on the horror of civil war. According to Mr. Rocher, opinion in Yunnan is divided as to the origin of the disease, some stating that it reached the province from Burma, while others maintain that it had existed previously in Tali-fu, in the extreme west of the province.

In the absence of authentic history as to how long the plague has existed in Yunnan, we may be justified in inferring that the outbreak there is traceable to sources further west. The disease prevails in Northern India—under the name of *māhamari* or *pali*—and, as we have seen, has prevailed in Persia and the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea; thence it may have found its way to Yunnan through Thibet or Northern Burmah. Of course there are writers who regard China as being the original home of the disease, whence it issued forth centuries ago to devastate the world. What their authority may be we cannot say, but probably it is no more reliable than that which has led certain speculators at all times to ascribe to China the honour of being the source alike of these diseases and inventions whose early history is involved in obscurity.

We can find no reliable evidence to show that the plague has been known in Canton previous to the present outbreak, although, of course, from vagueness of nomenclature, the history of any epidemic in China must always be surrounded with a certain amount of doubt. Making, however, all due allowance for this, we are, after diligent inquiry, obliged to accept the statement—received alike from official, medical, and lay sources—that although from time to time various epidemics have prevailed in Canton, especially in the spring of the year, the particular disease in question has not hitherto been observed.

At the commencement of the outbreak the native doctors with whom we came in contact expressed themselves as quite ignorant of the nature of the disease. They held no particular theory as to its causation or treatment.

In Pakhoi the disease has been known for quite thirty years, but little attention was drawn to it until the publication of Dr. Lowry's report on the severe epidemic prevailing in 1882.

Excluding as unscientific the theory that, under certain festering conditions, the virus has originated *de novo*, the question arises, How did the disease reach the seaboard of China? The starting point was doubtless Yunnan, and thence it most probably found its way to Pakhoi by one of the usual trade routes. The great highway of commerce between Yunnan and Kwangtung is the West River, on which are situated one or two entrepôts of trade with Pakhoi and Lien-chou, through which opium and other products of Yunnan are transmitted to those cities. Inquiry in official circles shows, however, that no outbreak of plague has been known at Nan-ning-fu, Wu-chou-fu, or other cities on the West River, which we should expect to find if the disease had spread by this channel. We feel, therefore, justified in excluding this route and limiting ourselves to the more probable supposition that it reached Pakhoi overland through Kwangsi or the borders of Tonkin. Chinese authorities state that it reached Pakhoi from Tonkin, but as it is known sporadically in the borders of Kwangsi, this latter source is more probable.

From official sources we learn that in 1891 the disease broke out in Kao-chao, the prefecture adjoining Lien-chou, in which Pakhoi is situated; it had evidently, according to the Chinese, spread northwards from the latter city. During the present spring the disease prevailed in other places between Kao-chao and Canton; the outbreak at Yang-chiang was especially severe, and no doubt other towns and villages suffered equally from the ravages of the plague in its march northwards. An erratic course is characteristic of its progress, an observation which is fully borne out by a glance at Mr. Rocher's map of its spread in Yunnan, where that traveller remarks that, "instead of visiting every village in its course, it would pass some completely by, returning, however, to those neglected spots months afterwards, when the epidemic would appear to have passed fas-

away." On the outbreak of the disease in Canton many persons, especially the well-to-do, removed into the country, thus forming fresh foci for its dissemination; and in the same way the outbreak in Hongkong no doubt arose from persons having migrated from Canton to Hongkong while actually suffering from the disease or during the short incubation period.

Apart from the risk of future outbreaks in South China, its presence there is fraught with danger to more northern ports. All attempts to keep out the plague by examination of steamers and quarantine regulations, such as have been adopted at some of the coast ports, must in the end prove futile, seeing that no control is exercised over the ingress of the disease by junks and other craft. Besides, there is nothing to hinder its spread overland, just as it reached Canton from Pakhoi. If it came to Canton by sea it is rather remarkable that Hongkong, which is nearer to, and in direct communication with, Pakhoi, should have been visited by an outbreak nearly two months later than Canton. In Hongkong improved house accommodation and hygienic arrangements may in the future prevent the plague attaining the same serious dimensions as in the severe outbreak of 1894; but what of the Chinese cities, where overcrowding, insanitary arrangements, and filth provide the conditions so necessary for its propagation? History repeats itself: the disease may remain comparatively quiescent for a few years, but will surely be again called into activity under the same fostering conditions as preceded the present outbreak.

CAUSATION.

History shows that previous epidemics have been preceded or attended by certain conditions and circumstances pointing to a causal connection.

1.—*Filthy and insanitary Surroundings.*—The sanitary arrangements of Canton are similar to those existing in other large cities of China. Public water-closets are established all over the city, from which both faeces and urine are daily removed and utilised as manure for the surrounding country. A drainage system can scarcely be said to exist, unless we regard as such the ditches that run under the large paving stones of the streets, and receive rain water and refuse matter washed into them from the houses and shops. The city being flat, there is no fall to empty those drains, and as no municipal control is exercised over the cleansing of them, this duty devolves on individual householders, who, of course, attend only to the sections which more immediately concern them. Consequently the drains are more often than not choked up, and are practically cesspools containing fermenting animal and vegetable refuse. In the smaller streets waste material finds its way into open side ditches, which are usually in the same neglected condition. Several canals enter the city, and as the tide has a rise and fall of about five feet twice in the twenty-four hours, a certain amount of rubbish is carried off in this way. When, however, the river is abnormally low, as during the early part of the year, these canals are like stagnant pools, thick with decomposing matter.

The water supply is equally defective. People living near the river use the river water, which, containing as it does the refuse of the immense boating population, is of course very impure. The majority depend on surface wells, which exist all over the city. These merely contain surface and tidal water which has percolated through a porous soil sodden with the filth of centuries. Bad at the best of times, one can readily imagine the chemically impure state of the water in these wells, almost empty after such a prolonged period of drought.

To persons imbued with Western ideas of sanitation this state of affairs must sound very unwholesome, and no doubt would prove most deadly but for the attention which Chinese in general bestow on the proper cooking of their food and drink. As cities in China go, Canton is comparatively clean and healthy, and, so far as concerns immunity from epidemic diseases in general, may even compare favourably with eastern cities boasting of more elaborate sanitary arrangements.

2.—*Prolonged Drought.*—The rainfall in Canton during the winter months is very small, but during the past winter and spring was exceptionally so.

Thus:		inches
1893.	November	—
	December	0.01
1894.	January	0.80
	February	0.31
	March	1.87
		2.99

Intelligent Chinese regarded this absence of rain as the most important factor in the propagation and dissemination of the disease, rendering as it did both wells and drains more filthy than usual.

3.—*Epidemics among the Lower Animals.*—In addition to the mortality among rats, we learn from Mr. Rocher that in Yunnan cattle, pigs, and dogs die in great numbers previous to the outbreak of the plague. Rats, however, suffer more than other animals, and are thus said "to give warning (*p'co hsin*), for they tumble about and die in the streets."

The same circumstance was noted in Canton both previous to and during the epidemic. From districts of the city where the disease had lasted for some time rats entirely disappeared, but kept on dying in other parts to which it subsequently extended. They would come out of their holes in broad daylight, run and tumble about in a dazed condition and die. Certain officials took steps to have all dead rats collected, offering about ten cash per head. Up to 8th May it was stated that the officer in charge of the west gate had in this way collected 22,000, which were duly interred outside the city. So far as we can learn, no other animals were affected. With a view to ascertain the cause of death, we from time to time examined the bodies of these rodents and noted the following postmortem appearances:—

- 1.—Stomach distended and filled with particles of food, sand, and indigestible substances; mucous membrane red and inflamed towards the pyloric end.
- 2.—Liver much enlarged and congested, and containing (a) encysted tapeworms (probably *Taenia saginata*)—these were present in every case, in some as many as nine cysts being noted; (b) ova of distomata, usually found in patches near the anterior border—in some the whole liver substance was infiltrated with ova.
- 3.—Congestion at base of lungs present in some—about 40 per cent.
- 4.—Glandular enlargement was present in 30 per cent. of those examined, but in a much less marked degree than in the human subject.

Is the disease in man and animals identical?* Should bacteriological examination give an answer in the affirmative, then we must recognise that these rodents are active agents in transmitting the disease from place to place for long distances overland.

We regret that, owing to the strong antipathy of the Cantonese to any foreign interference either in the treatment or postmortem examination of these cases, we have been unable to obtain any evidence bearing on the pathological conditions present in the human subject. Much light will most probably be thrown on the pathology of the disease by the band of scientists who are engaged in investigating the question in Hongkong.

COURSE AND SYMPTOMS.

A few stray cases occurred in the beginning of March, but it was not until the end of the month that attention was awakened, on account of its fatal prevalence in a poor neighbourhood near the south gate of the city, and also in Nansheng-li, a quarter occupied by Mohammedans, among whom the mortality was very high. At this time the type of the disease was exceedingly severe—of those attacked quite 80 per cent. dying. Towards the middle of April the cases we saw were of a milder type; but the disease subsequently became more severe and extended its boundaries to other parts of the city and also to Honam, the maximum mortality being reached about the middle of May. At the "Fang Pien So," an institution inside the north gate, we had opportunity from time to time of examining patients, and were thus enabled to form a more accurate estimate of the progress of the disease than by the

* Proved by Kitasato and Yersin shortly after the date of writing.

slender and unreliable information obtainable from outside sources. Rain fell copiously during the month of May and beginning of June, so that many streets were under water; the temperature remained comparatively low. But both these factors seemed to favour the propagation of the disease, as by the beginning of June it was rife in the western suburbs as well as in the surrounding towns and villages.

It is impossible to give any correct estimate of the mortality, as no official records of burials are kept. Comparing the estimates obtained from various sources, we believe the mortality from the beginning of the epidemic to the middle of June (the date of writing) to have been about 40,000—a large number, but, in a city with a population of about 1,500,000, by no means excessive when compared with the ravages of this fell disease in other cities. In the great plague of London (1665) it was estimated that 60,000 deaths occurred in a population of 500,000.

Although a goodly number of well-to-do people fell victims to the pestilence, the chief sufferers were the poor—overcrowded and badly housed. The people who escaped the scourge in the most marked degree were those living in upper stories and the boating population. With the exception of those put in boats after falling sick, scarcely a case was noted on the river. Many well-to-do people, observing this immunity, removed from their houses and made their homes on the water. Judging from this circumstance, therefore, and also from the fact that rats living in the ground and drains were the first animals to fall victims, we infer that the specific poison emanated from the soil. What the specific poison may be is not determined, but no doubt the insanitary conditions referred to, exaggerated by a prolonged period of drought, provided a specially suitable nidus for its growth and dissemination.

The immunity enjoyed by residents on the foreign Settlement of Shamien is remarkable, seeing that it is separated only by a creek some twenty yards wide from houses where cases of the plague occurred. Not only did foreigners living on the Settlement enjoy excellent health, but no case of plague occurred among their servants living on the premises; the rats also, up to the date of writing, remain healthy and lively.

The disease is not markedly contagious; it affects chiefly those occupying the same rooms and coming in close contact with the affected. Casual visitors, especially if there is free ventilation, are not liable to contract the disease. In its mode of spread, and in the limited area to which the poison extends beyond the body of the victim, the affection bears a remarkable likeness to typhus, although the course and symptoms show little or no affinity to that disease.

The malady runs no regular course, and has no characteristic eruption or day of crisis. With or without premonitory symptoms, such as malaise or rigor, fever sets in suddenly, rising to 105 deg. or even 107 deg. F., accompanied by headache, thirst, great restlessness, giddiness and subsequently stupor. In from eight to twenty-four hours a glandular enlargement occurs in the neck, axilla, or groin; in a few hours the swelling may reach the size of an egg, is hard and acutely tender. Coma supervenes, and death occurs in 48 hours from the onset or sooner. Cases lingering on for several days are regarded as hopeful, although relapses are liable to occur. The date of appearance of the bubo is most uncertain, and may occur at any stage of the fever; we have seen it as late as the fifth day, and as early as the onset of the fever. In a few cases vomiting of blood has been observed; in others petechiae appear, but no characteristic eruption. In milder cases glandular enlargements are absent, the prominent symptoms being fever and diarrhoea with great restlessness and giddiness. Boils may appear during convalescence. Post-mortem lividity is very pronounced, giving rise to the term "black plague."

The chief sufferers are women and children, most probably because, leading a more-in-door life, they are more freely exposed to the source of contagion. We have frequently remarked the number of female children suffering from the disease. A medical friend has suggested that as in wet weather Chinese stay in-doors,

and so absorb a larger dose of the specific virus, the increase after rainfall may be due to this circumstance.

TREATMENT.

* * * * *

Although we had abundant opportunity of examining the disease in the city, foreign treatment was at a decided discount, and but few cases came under our care.

A. B., foreigner, resident in the city; was first seen on 1st March. Temperature 104.5 deg.; pulse 96. Complained of pain in right groin. On examination found a small bubo, hard and very tender. On inquiry found that a servant resident on the premises had died the previous day, and although the exact nature of the disease could not be ascertained, still, from the fact that the total duration of illness was under 40 hours, accompanied by fever and giddiness, it was suspicious of plague.

Temperature ranged from 103 deg. to 105 deg. for four days, at the end of which period we removed patient to more healthy quarters. The temperature gradually declined, and under painting by iodine liniment and poulticing, the bubo was sufficiently soft to admit of incision on the 9th day, after which convalescence was rapid, although a fistulous opening persisted for some time afterwards.

In the few cases under our care the line of treatment was, briefly, free purgation by calomel at the outset, antipyrin to reduce high fever, quinine and stimulants when necessary. Having regard to the fact that the affection is more or less a form of blood-poisoning, some benefit might possibly be derived from the administration of germicidal remedies, such as carbolic acid, bin-iodide of mercury, etc. Our experience, however, in the matter of treatment has been too limited to warrant us in expressing an opinion on this subject; the rapidly fatal nature of many cases we saw led us to infer that remedies in most instances would prove of little avail, and that success must be chiefly looked for in the domain of preventive medicine.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.]

THE DEFENCE OF THE COLONY
AND THE EXTENSION OF
THE FRONTIER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

SIR.—An observant visitor to Hongkong cannot help being struck by the totally inadequate defensive power of the colony in regard to the immense interests at stake. Great Britain is surrounded by jealous enemies, desirous of destroying her commercial supremacy. For that purpose alone they have built, and are building, fast cruisers, and establishing, or trying to establish, coaling stations. Internal jealousies only prevent our enemies from succeeding therein.

As a Britisher I have, along with the majority of my fellow countrymen, implicit confidence in Great Britain's power of coming out top in the long run. But should war break out before we have got our defences into proper order incalculable harm would be done to our shipping and commerce before that war would be ended.

In the case of hostilities breaking out Hongkong would have to rely purely on her own resources, for the British China squadron would be required elsewhere, to keep our communications open, to protect our sea-borne commerce and the many ports teeming with British interests that lie stretched along the Chinese coast. Not one of these ports possesses the faintest power of defence. The Chinese Government, that ought to have the power of preserving their neutrality, has proved its incompetence during the late war, and therefore it is certain that the neutrality of those ports would not be respected by the foes of Great Britain.

The east and west entrances of Hongkong harbour are protected by forts. We may take it for granted that the forts are good, that the guns are good, and that the officers and men are thoroughly capable of carrying out their duties. But the south of the island and the north of Kowloon are absolutely without adequate protection. The south side of the island possesses many excellent landing places,

surveyed and thoroughly known to Foreign Governments, thanks to our unsuspecting and liberty loving British character, that hates and despises restrictions and espionage of every description. Let us suppose that the enemy's ships have eluded our squadron and have made a sudden descent upon us. It is quite on the cards that an attack might be made on the eve of, or before, our receiving the actual official proclamation of war, for in these shallow seas an unsuspecting looking junk would be quite capable of being utilised for the purpose of destroying our telegraphic communication. The enemy could land parties at Tytam Bay, Stanley, Deep Water Bay, Aberdeen, Pokfulam, or Sandy Bay; all of these places are vulnerable. These parties would of course be landed under the cover of the quick-firing and other guns on the enemy's ships. Their fire would simply annihilate "for want of weight and range" any of our light artillery or rifles that would have the temerity to show themselves on the hills facing south. The distances to be covered and the heavy hill work required of our troops in repelling such an attack wants a far larger garrison than we have in Hongkong. If the Hongkong Regiment were brought over from Kowloon, it would leave Kowloon at the mercy of any force operating from Mirs Bay on the north-east, or from Deep Bay on the north-west. A force of from ten to twelve thousand men would be all that would be required for a successful attack on Hongkong. Such a force could be carried in five or six of the vessels composing the Russian Volunteer Fleet. Once allow such a force to gain the crests of hills overlooking Victoria Battery, Fly Point Battery, Belcher's Battery, the forts and defences at Lyeemoon, they would "by rifle and machine gun fire" render those places untenable. These steamers of the Russian Volunteer Fleet have sufficient speed to elude all except one or two of our fastest cruisers.

Russia alone, on the completion of her Siberian railway, will be able to assemble, ship, and despatch such a force without the knowledge of our authorities. For do we not know about the espionage that is exercised over foreigners in Vladivostock, an espionage that is never relaxed, and an espionage that would be more stringently exercised than ever on the eve of the outbreak of hostilities. The late China and Japan war is an instance of the way that secret preparations can be carried out. Therefore it behoves us to prepare ourselves for all eventualities by erecting forts in suitable positions on the south side of the island. The present time is an excellent one to agitate for such a purpose, for we are now blessed with a strong Government that seems to be truly awake to the necessities of Greater Britain. It will be said that all this is the work of the military authorities. Granted. But a strong representation from the colony would strengthen the hands of those authorities when dealing with the Home Government aenent the supplies necessary to the strengthening of the defences of the colony. The defences of Hongkong being placed on a suitable basis would be a gain not only to herself but to the British squadron out here. A successful or a partially successful attack on Hongkong would be a serious blow to British prestige in India and the Far East. Residents out here must surely appreciate the meaning of that.

An extension of Kowloon is also absolutely necessary for the future safety and welfare of the colony. For to the Kowloon peninsula we must look for ground on which to establish manufactures. As very pertinently pointed out by "Observer" in your paper of the 7th inst., the one great obstacle to the development of manufacturing industries in the colony lies in the scarcity of fresh water. The high range of hills lying to the north of Kowloon would be a splendid gathering ground for the much needed fresh water. Factories once established at Kowloon would take over to the mainland the greater portion of the Chinese colony now located on the island, thereby giving the much desired room for the widening of the streets and other sanitary arrangements. Hongkong would then be regarded as the European quarter, and would be the directing centre. Kowloon would be the working centre. With improved ferry communica-

tion but little or no time would need to be lost between the offices and workshops.

Mr. Editor, you should use your influence in getting up an agitation on this subject, for it is most assuredly a serious matter for the colony. The whole matter should be seriously threshed out, and the requirements of the colony should be sent home, as also placed before the new British Minister to China, who will be arriving here ere long. Being a soldier, and an eminently practical man, one not imbued with the contaminating influence of Peking, he will no doubt obtain such an extension of Kowloon from the Chinese Government as will satisfy not only the commercial element, but the military also. We must not forget that Sir Claude MacDonald is a young man, full of energy, and desirous of making a name. Let Hongkong come to an understanding about its weak points and let the Chamber of Commerce place this matter in his hands.—Believe me, sir, yours, &c.,

BRITISHER.

Hongkong, 9th March, 1896.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

SIR.—A letter from "Britisher" in your issue of this morning calls attention to the military weakness of Hongkong. Before dealing with the matter as an Imperial interest, it is natural to ask, "What is Hongkong herself willing to do to remedy this weakness?"

I suggest that Hongkong lead the way by establishing a local militia with compulsory service for defence of the colony only on the following lines:

- 1.—Every British subject (Chinese of course excepted) resident in the colony in a private capacity to be liable to serve up to a certain age.
- 2.—Exemptions to be allowed on payment of an exemption tax (say \$100 a month) in lieu of personal service.
- 3.—Foreign residents would of necessity be incapable of serving, but all those in a private capacity would have to pay the "exemption tax."
- 4.—The sum accruing from the exemption tax to be credited to a "Defence Fund," the amount of which to be deducted from the military contribution, the balance only being charged to the ordinary colonial revenue.

We should thus gain the following advantages:

- 1.—An addition to our defensive strength.
- 2.—The removal of the anomaly of foreigners using our colony free of charge as a base for carrying on commercial war against ourselves.
- 3.—A substantial reduction of the military contribution.

It is fully time that the obligation of contributing to defence were acknowledged in all Crown Colonies and also in India. A great opportunity now lies before Hongkong if she would take the lead in asserting this great duty of good citizenship. She would render valuable service to the Empire and would place a feather in her cap which would redound to the credit and honour of "Queen Victoria's eldest child."—Yours obediently,

ANOTHER BRITISHER.

Hongkong, 12th March, 1896.

Sir,—I have read with interest Britisher's letter re defence of Hongkong and extension of frontier in your issue of the 12th inst. It is perhaps a favourable time, when the necessity for the defence of our most Eastern outpost, trading-depot, naval-station, and coaling-station is brought prominently forward by recent events in America, Africa, North China, and Siam, for me to point out two needs of Hongkong (both from an industrial, sanitary, military, and naval point of view) which can easily be if not completely supplied certainly greatly helped.

(1)—One of the great troubles of Hongkong in the past, which will, if not speedily remedied, be much augmented in the future, is the want of water. Well, has it ever occurred to the Government and the residents what a simple matter it would be for an enterprising enemy to (and suppose this to happen in the dry season) destroy the embankments of the Tytam and Pokfulam reservoirs and run the whole of our store of water into the sea. Two or three well planted shells from a war vessel passing

along the southern shore of the island would make breaches in these embankments and the flood of water issuing therefrom would soon complete the ruin, and then, with these reservoirs dry for some months and the harbour blockaded, we would know what it was to have no water at all. Another method might be followed, viz.—spies or agents of the enemy might destroy these embankments some night with dynamite. Or still another course might be adopted, and the enemy land in force on the south side, cut the water mains, and reserve the water supply for their own use.

Well, sir, don't you think it high time that a progressive community like Hongkong sank artesian wells (several of them) both in Hongkong and Kowloon at suitable points, if only to supplement the present water supply, not to mention as an insurance against the danger I have pointed out. It would be a purer, cheaper, and more abundant supply than would be obtained by another reservoir besides being safe from a coup by the enemy.

(2)—Another great trouble in Hongkong is the over-crowding. Well, it is high time there were at least one line of tram communicating along the whole of the northern shore of the island and with the southern shore if possible, too; the latter portion should be as far as possible out of reach of shot and shell fire from an enemy's ships. The tramway would in case of an armed attack or blockade be a great addition to the effective power of our defending force, enabling the troops to be rapidly massed where required. Some light field artillery ought besides certainly to be kept on the heights, ready for use and for the defence of the reservoirs.

As regards the extension of the frontiers, all the islands of the surrounding archipelago ought to be annexed and the frontier carried well beyond Mirs Bay and Deep Bay. China will cede a province as easily as a small barren island, as witness the Russians having practically taken over the whole of North China.

More torpedo boats are also required and then, if the garrison was sufficiently augmented, our fleet would be free to go out and strike effectively, Hongkong being a refuge for them if necessary.

AN OLD NAVAL RESERVE MAN.

Hongkong, 14th March, 1896.

HOW TO DEAL WITH THE TAIPING-SHAN MATERIAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "DAILY PRESS."

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The answer is not very far to seek when six scientific and otherwise intelligent men meet together to discuss a vital question and cannot come to any definite understanding with regard to what shall be done with the houses, &c., within the resumed area of the plague stricken Taipingshan. I believe most of these houses are built of Chinese blue bricks, red earth, and a promise of lime. If so, I firmly believe that the germs of plague bacilli are in those porous bricks in their hundreds of millions, too small to be detected as such by the most powerful glass, but there all the same, as there is not sufficient lime in the mortar or upon the walls to keep them out, and wherever air will penetrate there they will be in great numbers, and no fumigation will kill them while they remain in their aurelian state. What is to be done, sir? To sell these houses as they stand for re-erection while any doubt remains would be a disgrace to this colony for ever. To pull the houses down and throw away the bricks, &c., would be dangerous and a wilful waste. If I am not presuming too much I would (through the medium of your columns) suggest that the houses be pulled down and the bricks re-burned on the ground (and all the rubbish and earth with them) on the old fashioned closed clamp system. This would cost about \$1.50 per thousand for coal and labour. After being subjected to this process they might be sold by auction to be used again for house building, or any other purpose, without any fear of infection. If there is no one on the Board who understands this process I should be very pleased to give them any information I can, providing my employers were willing.—Thanking you in anticipation, I remain, yours very faithfully,

OBSERVER.

Hongkong, 14th March, 1896.

THE CENSURE OF COLONEL CHAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE DAILY PRESS."

SIR,—I agree with you that your contemporary the *Hongkong Telegraph*'s defence of the militant members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce is hardly a happy one. As you say, the suggested analogy between the action of those gentlemen and the case of an invitation by French or German residents to a French or German official passing through to open a club in Hongkong does not hold. Put the case of a German official in Heligoland, before the cession, or a Spanish official in Gibraltar, and one comes much nearer the mark. But still, as you point out, the analogy is not even then quite complete, for the Chinese officials have been in the habit of referring to this colony as though it still formed part of Kwangtung province, and this fact by itself would suffice as a reason for publishing the Viceroy's censure on his officer and explicit repudiation of Chinese jurisdiction. I am one of the last of those who would seek to curtail in any unnecessary manner the rights and liberties of our Chinese fellow residents. On the contrary, not knowing what great events may be in store for us within the next few years, I believe that our true policy, from an Imperial as well as from a local point of view, is to augment our prestige and inspire confidence in our rule amongst the population of the mainland by just and sympathetic treatment of the large Chinese population within our borders. But surely insistence on the fact of British sovereignty within the colony against all challenge, direct or indirect, is a duty incumbent on all of us, officials or unofficials. If I may hazard an opinion I should say, that an unfortunate practice of carping apparently for carping's sake, on the part of one or two prominent citizens, otherwise marked out by experience and ability as leaders of a compact Reform Party, has done, and does, more to alienate public support from them and the cause than any other circumstance whatever.

E. ROBINSON.

Hongkong, 16th March 1896.

CANTON NOTES.

[FROM THE "CHUNG NGOI SAN PO."]

The manager of the China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company in Shanghai arrived at Canton the other day. He is going with the Canton manager of the said Company to Wuchow. It is said that his intention is to establish an office in Wuchow, which has been declared a treaty port.

The Tartar General and the Assistant Tartar General have issued a joint notification to the effect that a despatch has just been received from the Tsungli Yamen to the effect that the Ministers of Great Britain and Holland have reported that false coins, which are most probably made in the districts of Ka-ying-chow, Hing-ling, Fatshan, Amoy, Swatow, and their neighbourhoods are often imported into foreign countries, either by passengers or by merchants who send them thither as merchandise, and that if steps are not taken to stop this fraudulent practice trade in general will be endangered. The Viceroy has consequently ordered all the local officers to do their utmost to hunt out all the false coin makers. This notice is especially issued to announce to all the Manchus and people who belong to the eight standards that if any one is discovered to be guilty of making counterfeit coins he will be severely dealt with. A reward of \$200 will be given for the capture of offenders.

Admiral Cheng Shiu-chung is seriously ill. His thigh is swollen up. He still remains at Tiger Pass.

Fire broke out on the 4th instant in a theatre in Sai-chiu. The natives worked promptly and the flames were got under control by pulling down the structure, which was a mat shed. Sixteen persons were reported injured, but no lives were lost.

The likin station in the South Gate district for levying the tax on salt fish was broken down by the salt fish sellers on the 9th instant. The farmers of the tax have petitioned the Superintendent of likin to effect the arrest of the offenders.

As cash is so dear the Viceroy has recently sent a Weiyuen to Foochow and Shanghai to

buy copper and lead to make more small coins. The new cash, the making of which is intended to be commenced on the 15th instant, is smaller than the old one.

Two hundred more soldiers have been sent by order of the Viceroy to be stationed on Shamian under the command of Colonel Cheng Yun-tsui, son of Admiral Cheng Shui-chung. A good number of soldiers have been sent back from Waishaw and Fa-an to Canton.

RAUB GOLD.

The following telegram from Ranb, dated 4th March, has been received at Singapore:

"Crushing finished, 2,200 tons stone realized 1,119 oz. smelted gold. Prospects are more favourable."

The above is the result of the Company's operations for the period from 6th January, 1896, the date of last general clean up, until 29th February, 1896, the end of the Company's financial year in Singapore; during this period a few days were non-working ones, on account of the Chinese New Year holidays. The general clean up has been made after only two months' crushing, instead of the usual three months, for the purpose of enabling the Company's accounts for the past financial year being correctly closed.

The total returns for the past financial year are:—6.174 oz. 17 dwts. gold from 12,299 tons stone, an average of 10 dwts. 1 grain per ton.

The total value of gold extracted during the financial year is nearly £23,500.

THE MAGAZINE EXPLOSION AT KIANGYIN.

Since writing one week ago, your correspondent has attempted to get a little more at the inwardness of the trouble in the camps here, but little success has attended his efforts. However, that a rebellion was planned to take place, beginning about the 13th of the Chinese moon, seems to be evident. The plan was to kill the General in command, get possession of the magazines and rifles, and then make themselves strong in the city. The foreign instructors in the forts were to be put under arrest, and sent in well guarded boats, without injury to their persons, to Shanghai, or some place where they would be out of the way. That all this was not carried out was owing to the accidental explosion of the main magazine, just across the river, north from the forts. The magazine was being rifled of its contents at the time of the explosion, and a very large proportion of the powder and cartridges had been removed. Much of the powder was very old and the tin cans in which it was stored had rusted. It is supposed that the explosion was caused by friction set up by these cans being opened with cleavers. But no one really knows how the explosion did occur, since no one in or immediately around the buildings escaped. An expert has estimated that the amount of powder consumed could not have been less than fifteen thousand pounds. Four-inch shells were thrown three hundred and fifty yards. A shell, at the distance of three hundred yards from the magazine, cut a man into two about the middle. A hole ten feet deep by twenty feet in circumference was blown in the ground on the site of the magazine, so that the mangled condition of those in or about the building can better be imagined than described. Rifle firing had begun among the opposing factions, and even the camp under the guns of the forts had taken violent possession of all the rifles and ammunition in their reach, and firing had commenced among them. But the explosion was so terrific in its character, and so destructive to life, nearly 300 persons being killed, that the mutinous factions were completely and immediately awed. So that it is probable that the explosion was, under the circumstances, a blessing in disguise.

The soldiers in rebellion were Anhui men who had been stationed here for over twenty years. Last year the Viceroy, Chang Chih-tung, placed a Captain Kao in command of a portion of the troops. Captain Kao had been in Kwangtung for a number of years, and brought some improved ideas of discipline and drill back with him, while his commissariat department was looked after in something like

as honest manner. All this, of course, disturbed the happy-go-easy life of men and petty officials. For his pains, the captain was thoroughly disliked by all under him. Proposing to make more sweeping reforms and dismiss the superannuated men around him, he found that he had stirred up a hornet's nest in the shape of secret societies. Orders from higher officials to disband these men brought the trouble to a climax with the above results. Captain Kao received personal injury and was made a prisoner. General Li in command has been recalled and his place taken by another man, General Yü. The orders to disband the troops have been revoked and the turbulent elements have settled down into their pristine lethargy.

To illustrate the carelessness and ignorance of the Chinese when one would think they ought to know better, a large supply of foreign-manufactured metallic cartridges were stored in the magazine and great numbers of these were not exploded. To these the people helped themselves freely. One man wishing to see what was in these strange little brass tubes placed one on a stone, took another stone and began to pound it. The cartridge exploded, and the ball passed through the man's body, killing him almost instantly.—*N. C. Daily News* correspondent.

THE MISSIONARY DEPUTATION TO PEKING.

Reports have from time to time arrived at Shanghai concerning the visit of the Rev. Timothy Richard, as a representative of the Protestant Missions in China, to Peking, to memorialise the Chinese Government for the removal of certain hindrances that hamper the work of missionaries in China, more particularly the insulting references in Chinese books in circulation, arousing the prejudice and opposition of the people, and the suppression of anti-Christian proclamations which lead to riot and pillage, as at Chengtu. The Rev. J. Wherry, a coadjutor of the Rev. T. Richard, who arrived recently at Shanghai, communicated to the *Shanghai Mercury* the particulars as to the progression of the task they had undertaken, up to the period when he left Peking, but the arrival of the Rev. T. Richard afforded us an opportunity to get fuller and later details on the subject, which this gentleman with his customary courtesy was pleased to oblige us with. In conversation with a representative of the *Mercury*, he said he left Shanghai to proceed to Peking in September last, to present, if possible, personally, a Missionary Memorial to the Chinese Government. In the Memorial it was asked that the Emperor should instruct the Tsungli Yamen to investigate the whole question, in conference with the missionaries, and this was at once granted by the Throne. The Rev. T. Richard and Rev. J. Wherry, and after Mr. Wherry's departure the Rev. H. H. Lowry, were also invited to visit the Tsungli Yamen whenever they wished. After the missionaries had visited some members of the Tsungli Yamen privately, they called upon the British *Chargé d'Affaires* and American Minister, who very readily acceded to the request to introduce them to the Tsungli Yamen for the first time. The call upon the Ministers was in order that the official call on the Tsungli Yamen should be correctly made, and the two Ministers at once responded with their co-operation. Mr. Denby and his son very readily decided to accompany the deputation and his decision was much appreciated. On November 14th this formal interview with the Tsungli Yamen took place, and it lasted about one hour and a half. At that interview the Memorial was presented and the Chinese Ministers saw by it that an investigation was desired, and arrangements were made for a second interview. The Memorial asked for three things:—First, the real suppression of Chinese literature antagonistic to Christianity, because the missionaries believe such literature is at the root of the riots, and so long as such books are in circulation there is no hope of preventing anti-missionary riots; second, that real liberty be granted to the mandarins, as well as to the people, to become Christians;

third, a real cultivation of friendly feelings with the missionaries, as they have no other end in view but of helping China. The results of the deputation and Memorial may be considered as follows:—At the first private interview with the Tsungli Yamen, two leading members, Weng Tungho (virtually the Prime Minister) and another, said they considered that what the missionaries were asking for was reasonable, and after the public interview the Government informed the missionaries that they were at liberty to visit the Yamen whenever they desired. The Tsungli Yamen furthermore informed the British and American Legations that what was asked in the Memorial would be granted and an Edict would be issued in a few days to that effect. So about December 1st the Edict was expected daily upon the assurances of two members of the Yamen. But unfortunately there came that famous Edict which degraded for evermore two men, one a Chinaman and the other a Manchu, and that Chinaman was one of the members of the Tsungli Yamen whose attitude was most friendly towards the missionaries. From that time Weng Tungho had not sufficient support to carry out his original intention. But the missionaries continued to have several interviews with the Tsungli Yamen, and important questions were raised which gave the missionaries good opportunities for explaining the real position and aims of Christian Missions, which the Chinese Ministers were not previously aware of. Besides these conversations, several documents were handed to the Ministers, bearing upon the question of religious liberty in general, and Weng Tungho seemed to be in earnest to know the real state of matters. There was no immediate action taken by the Tsungli Yamen on what the deputation laid before them. Seeing that the Tsungli Yamen were not asking any more questions and the missionaries feeling they could not do anything more in regard to the matter with the Tsungli Yamen, they called on the British and American Legations to thank them for introducing the deputation to the Yamen, and to ask the British *Chargé d'Affaires* and American Minister to press the matter, as the missionaries were leaving and hoped that the foreign officials would not lose sight of the memorial but continue to press the matter from time to time. Up to the time of the departure of the Rev. T. Richard, there had been no reply made by them concerning their memorial. But Weng Tungho having learned that one of the missionaries was leaving, he did him the honour of calling upon him and explained the situation, remarking that there were difficulties raised both by his superiors and his colleagues, but that, nevertheless, he personally highly appreciated the services that were being rendered by good missionaries to China. So far as he himself was concerned, the slanderous literature would certainly be prohibited, and a better feeling of friendship ought to be cultivated between the mandarin and the missionary. As far as the permission for mandarins to become Christians was concerned, all the Prime Minister said was, they had never been interdicted from becoming converts to Christianity. Therefore, whilst the Protestant missionaries did not get all they wished, still they succeeded in presenting the Memorial to the Throne, which many at first doubted; they almost secured an Edict; and the good will from the highest man in the Empire alone was worth a visit to Peking.

REFORM.

So far as general reform is concerned the Rev. T. Richard sent a letter and some of his books to Weng Tungho, saying that if he could spare the time the writer would like to have an interview with him and discuss the question of reform in China. After a little time the Prime Minister granted the interview, along with another member of the Tsungli Yamen, and the rev. gentleman laid before them a general scheme of reform. After speaking for about an hour Weng Tungho thanked the Rev. T. Richard very heartily, and said he would be gratified if the interviewer would commit what he had stated to writing, so that the question could be studied. This the Rev. T. Richard did; and this was also laid before the Emperor during the time the Reform Club in Peking was

in motion. The Rev. T. Richard constantly met the leading members, and, with the Rev. G. Reid and Mr. W. N. Pethick, did their best to guide the members in their efforts towards light and liberty. A great number of officials at Peking were, however, opposed to the movement, and are completely ignorant, the censors excelling the rest probably in that qualification. Some of the old Conservatives hearing of the Club, and finding that the Reform Society had not memorialised the Throne, found a cause for complaint in this irregularity. The Reform Society, although they had not really memorialised the Throne, was not acting without consulting the high authorities in Peking, and had their consent. The explanation was that the opposition was simply a question of party. The society was consequently disestablished, but now there is a movement to reconstruct this Reform Society on a far better basis, with a view to influence a wider circle and make it extend all over the Empire. In the last interview the Rev. T. Richard had with the Prime Minister, the latter raised questions of reform and distinctly said he was anxious to have the Reform Society re-established and placed on a satisfactory footing. Sun Kianai, the Imperial Tutor, had also been reading Mackenzie's *Nineteenth Century*, and this led to an interview between him and the Rev. T. Richard.

Like Weng Tungho, the Tutor is a most agreeable man, gentle in his ways, with a great liking for discourse, and seemed anxious to bring about suitable reforms to meet the needs of China. "It is a thousand pities," said the Rev. T. Richard, "that these two men, who occupy the immediate right and left hand of the Emperor, should not have had some experience of foreign affairs. Without knowledge of foreign affairs it is impossible to guide China aright, but with this knowledge, though China is almost in a hopeless condition, much might be done with good and well informed men."

AN OVERDUE STEAMER.

Singapore, 9th March.

Grave fears are entertained for the safety of the steamer *Teresa*, Captain Slaker, which is now considerably overdue. The *Teresa* belongs to Messrs. Wee Bin & Co., of Market Street, and she left this port on the 20th of last month for Macassar. She was last heard of as having left Boloeling for Macassar, via Ampenan, but although this is only a voyage of a day and a quarter she has not since been heard of. On the 5th inst., just as the steamer *Macassar* was leaving Sourabaya for Singapore, Messrs. Wee Bin wired to her to go in search of the missing vessel, and a Dutch gunboat is also rendering assistance. But no news has as yet been received, and great anxiety is felt as to the safety of the ship. This anxiety will be greatly intensified among the European residents of Singapore by the fact that the Rev. G. M. Reith, late Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, is a passenger on the *Teresa*. The vessel is insured in five different offices for the total sum of \$100,000—*Straits Times*.

VICEROY LIU INCLINED TOWARDS WESTERN PROGRESS.

[COMMUNICATED.]

Viceroy Liu Kw'en-ye before he went up north was known to be extremely anti-foreign. While there he was thrown into intercourse with foreigners, especially with Herr von Hanneken, and therefore was able to see and hear a deal that he did not know before in regard to Western ideas, so we do not wonder at hearing that he is more favourably inclined towards foreigners. We are now informed that he is thinking of making a number of improvements in and around Nanking. When he arrived at Nanking from the north, a short time since, when landing, those who came to meet him naturally thought he would like to go to the yamen by the new Maloo, but they were greatly mistaken; he simply gave his hand a wave of contempt and told them to proceed by the old round-about

route, by steam-launch and chair. He pretended to shun the new Maloo that Chang Chih-tung had just finished, and, as Chang was still at Nanking, Liu thought it was wise to have nothing to do with the improvements Chang had made, for fear he should be called upon to finish what Chang had commenced. Liu also preferred to take up his quarters at the Kinchai yamen (yamen for Ambassadors) instead of going direct to the proper Viceroy's yamen. Although Liu pretended not to care for the new Maloo and other improvements, as soon as Chang's back was turned he at once let those around him know that he intended to commence the march of progress, and it is now reported that he intends to continue the extension of the new Maloo to Nanmen (South Gate) which will make it three miles longer. This alone shows that he is determined to go ahead in the right direction. To the surprise of many of his own people he sent out invitations to all German commissioned officers to take tiffin with him at the Kinchai yamen yesterday (Sunday), and for several days the yamen underlings were busy borrowing and buying glasses, knives, forks, spoons, crockery, &c., for the occasion. Why he should only invite the German commissioned officers and leave out the civil engineers, of whom there are four now in Nanking, is not known, whilst others are surprised that Liu did not wait till he had got into his own yamen, which is now being repaired and renovated. Liu has also made another move in the right direction, in giving orders to dig out the canal running from Kyautomen to Shakwan. This canal connects with the Yangtze, and it has sadly wanted cleaning out for a considerable time, as navigation was almost impossible; while, if dug out properly, it would prevent inundation in the case of heavy rains, etc. A large number of soldiers left Nanking on Saturday morning last to commence this work. Before leaving, Chang Chih-tung memorialized the Throne asking that Liu might take over all contracts in regard to the employment of foreign officers, etc. By latest intelligence from Nanking, then, it seems that Liu is inclined favourably towards foreigners and Western progress; but some are inclined to doubt his sincerity, and think it is only pretence on his part; however, in a short time this will be easily proved. Nothing has yet been settled about railways, nor has the task of surveying been commenced, although there are two German civil engineers, as well as two from the establishment of Messrs. Cockerell & Co. Viceroy Chang Chih-tung left Nanking on the 1st inst. in a Chinese gunboat; he travelled up slowly, making a number of stoppages, which were no doubt made to enable the officials at the different places to make their calls. He has arrived safely at Wuchang.—*Mercury.*

WRECK OF THE "HUMBER."

The *Chugai Shogyo* published the following telegrams:

Pescadores, 3rd March.

The British steamer *Humber*, owned by the Mercantile Steamship Company, with 3,000 tons of rice belonging to the Mitsui Busan Kaisha on board, has run ashore on Sand Island.

Later.

The British steamer *Humber*, which stranded on Sand Island, has finally foundered. All hands were, however, rescued. Three thousand tons of rice went down with the vessel.

HONGKONG.

The bubonic plague has fallen into second place this week owing to a cattle plague which broke out on the Pokfulam Dairy Farm. One hundred and thirty-four cattle out of a herd of one hundred and ninety-four have been attacked, and all the diseased ones were, after a disgraceful delay on the part of somebody who has not yet claimed the blame, dumped into the sea. The dumping process was far from successful, as several of the carcasses are now floating about the sea in the neighbourhood of the colony. The number of bubonic plague cases has now reached 251 for the year, so that the daily average remains about the same. On Thursday the Sanitary Board met and im-

portant explanations were made in reference to the sale of building materials from the Tainpingshan area, which was the hotbed of the disease in 1894. A Marine Court of Inquiry was held on Monday to hear charges preferred against the second officer of the *Chittagong*. The case was dismissed. On the same day St. Patrick's Day was celebrated by a dance in the City Hall.

The Garrison were engaged in field firing on Saturday.

The *Loosok* made a quick run up from Bangkok in five days eighteen hours.

There were 2,284 visitors to the City Hall Museum last week, of whom 129 were Europeans.

The Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders has issued invitations for a dance at the City Hall on the 27th March.

The football match between the Hongkong Football Club and the Rifle Brigade on Monday afternoon resulted in a draw, each side scoring one goal.

The maximum temperature last month was 68.7, on the 24th, and the minimum 43.2, on the 15th, the mean for the whole month being 56. The rainfall amounted to 7.945 inches.

The two truck coolies charged with causing the death of a boy in Queen's Road by running him down with a truck were on the 11th March committed for trial at the Sessions. Mr. Hastings appeared for the defence.

There was a rise of ten points in Hongkong and Shanghai Bank shares on the 11th March due to the conclusion of the new Chinese loan of £16,000,000 by the Anglo-German Syndicate, of which the Bank is the leading member. A further rise of six points has since taken place.

The following Ordinances have been allowed by Her Majesty:—An Ordinance to further amend the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891, an Ordinance to further amend the Stamp Ordinance, 1886, and an Ordinance to authorise in certain cases judicial investigations into the causes of fire.

Medical inspection has been established in the ports of Indo-China as regards arrivals from Hongkong, but quarantine will only be enforced where there is sickness or suspicious cases on board. The import of rags, old clothes, and bedding of Asiatic origin from Hongkong is interdicted.

Mr. Van Buren, Agent of the P. M. Co., informs us that he is in receipt of a cable from San Francisco advising him that the *City of Rio de Janeiro*, which left San Francisco on February 6th, arrived in Honolulu on 1st March short of fuel, and that she sailed again on the 5th for Yokohama.

The Jubilee of Zetland Lodge will be celebrated on Saturday evening by a dinner, to be followed by a Lodge meeting, at which we understand the District Grand Master, Hon. C. P. Chater, has consented to preside and give an address on the history of Masonry in the colony and of Zetland Lodge in particular. All the offices in the Lodge are on this occasion to be filled by Past Masters.

On the morning of the 11th March Charles Murdock Mobberly, paymaster of the *Swift*, was tried by court-martial for being absent from his ship. The Court consisted of Captain Lane (President), Captain Login, Commander Wylie, and Commander Lisle, and the trial took place on H.M.S. *Narcissus*. The accused was sentenced to lose all seniority as paymaster, was dismissed from his ship, and also severely reprimanded.

Mr. Frank Collins, Local Secretary of the Gas Company, writes:—In reference to a paragraph in your paper of the 11th March reporting the firing of a gas meter, I think it advisable to inform you that the "mystery" is easily explained. The meter and connections have now been removed and we find that the brass plug of the main tap, fixed to the inlet of the meter, has been stolen. When this occurred gas escaped at once and this was most probably ignited by a light carried by the thief. I hope this explanation will prevent any unnecessary alarm arising amongst gas consumers.

There was another armed robbery late on Thursday night. Six men, four of whom were armed with revolvers, entered a mat shed at Quarry Bay Point, ordered the inmates—ten in number—to observe silence under penalty of being shot, and then ransacked the premises.

On the previous day \$300 was stored in the shed, but it fortunately happened that most of this money had been paid away, and the desperate thieves could find only \$50, which of course they carried away. The victims were so alarmed that they did not give information to the police until hours after the occurrence. This was a pity, because if the police had known earlier the gang might have been captured on their return to town.

MISCELLANEOUS.

There has been a strike of hackney carriage owners at Saigon owing to an increase in the licence fee.

The *China Gazette* says the Chinese up river have various reports about German steamers being put on the run from Shanghai to Hankow.

Hangchow despatches state a number of Japanese have recently arrived in that city for the purpose of purchasing property in the new settlements.—*N. C. Daily News*.

The schooner *Aida*, twenty-six days from Shanghai, arrived at Port Townsend, Washington, on the 9th February, having made the best passage across the Pacific Ocean on record for a sailing vessel.

A heavy snowstorm was experienced over a large part of Japan on the 3rd March. A down train from Tokyo was blocked by snow, and found it impossible to reach Numasaki Station, so that it had to return to Shirai. The hills to the east of Kobe, including Mayasan, Rokko-san, and beyond as far as the eye can see, were on the morning of the 4th covered with a mantle of snow—a sight that has not been visible there for years.

H.E. Chang Chih-tung, we have been informed, has obtained the consent of the Throne to taking with him from Nanking many whom he had gathered round him during his short *régime* in Nanking. Amongst these are Huang Taotai, ex-Consul-General at Singapore, and recently appointed one of the four directors of the proposed Shanghai-Soochow railway, and several other well-known officials in Nanking and Shanghai. The reason given for taking these foreign educated officers with him to Wuchang is that he must have reliable men to push through the Hankow-Peking line.—*N. C. Daily News*.

The Kiukiang correspondent of the *N. C. Daily News* writes under date of 4th March:—The Viceroy Chang Chih-tung passed here this morning on his way from Nanking to Wuchang on board his steam yacht, and accompanied by several other steamers and native craft. The banks of the river were lined with braves clad in their best attire, who gave the great man a salute with musketry as he passed. The people here are quite indifferent as to whether he goes or stays. Like the donkey in the fable who was being urged by his master to flee with him from the approaching enemy, and replied, "Not I, leave me in peace to finish my thistles, it matters little to me whose donkey I am, as long as I have to carry my panniers," so the people are not concerned in either the arrival of Liu Kun-yi or the departure of Chang Chih-tung, for their burdens are made none the lighter in any case.

We learn from the *Shanghai Mercury* that two serious accidents happened at the Shanghai Paper Hunt Club meeting held on the 7th March. In the first steeplechase Mr. Cumming, who had been riding Geronimo in good style, fell under his horse, who came down at one of the hurdles. As the jockey did not rise, Dr. Macleod and Dr. Lalaccca at once ran to his assistance, but a man-of-war's man, with commendable energy, though perhaps with less discretion, ran and at once raised Cumming and was about to carry him off to the stand. It was found that the jockey was cut somewhat, but was not seriously injured. He was borne off the field on the stretcher. Ruff Lad by this time fallen, and Mr. C. Dallas, who was riding in the race, at once stopped and got off to assist the injured man. His case was more serious, and in addition to being unconscious it was feared he had sustained internal injuries. He was borne off the field unconscious on a stretcher and sent to the General Hospital.

[March, 18, 1896.]

COMMERCIAL.

TEA.

EXPORT OF TEA FROM CHINA TO GREAT BRITAIN.

	1895-96	1894-95
	lbs.	lbs.
Canton and Macao	7,446,099	7,813,790
Amoy	685,228	772,692
Foochow	1,175,408	14,357,248
Shanghai and Hankow	21,111,512	21,591,499
	40,418,247	44,535,239

EXPORT OF TEA FROM CHINA TO UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

	1895-96	1894-95
	lbs.	lbs.
Amoy	13,528,593	18,832,256
Foochow	6,066,651	4,626,556
Shanghai	29,029,320	25,793,160
	48,924,564	48,754,971

EXPORT OF TEA FROM CHINA TO ODESSA.

	1895-96	1894-95
	lbs.	lbs.
Hankow and Shanghai	27,240,663	22,566,223

EXPORT OF TEA FROM JAPAN TO UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

	1895-96	1894-95
	lbs.	lbs.
Yokohama	29,692,147	28,686,847
Kobe	18,622,433	16,726,614
	48,314,560	45,413,461

SILK.

SHANGHAI, 12th March.—(From Messrs. Crounie and Burkhill's circular.)—London telegrams are to 10th current and quote Blue Elephants 10/6. Raw Silk.—There are no transactions in White Silks to record, and quotations are quite nominal. A very limited business has passed in Yellow Silks, and no settlements of Tussah are reported. Waste Silk.—A few small parcels of Guin Waste have found buyers, but the market is ill supplied and further arrivals this season unlikely. Pongees.—1,000 pieces of White Cloth have been taken off the market 21/22 in. by 70 yards at Tls. 14.40 to Tls. 15.25 according to quality. At Tls. 2.60 to Tls. 2.65 there are still buyers of 21/23 oz Shantung of various widths and lengths.

Purchases include:—Yellow Silk.—Mienyang at Tls. 23c.

EXPORT OF SILK FROM CHINA AND JAPAN TO EUROPE.

	1895-96	1894-95
	bales.	bales.
Shanghai	48,503	46,265
Canton	14,750	18,495
Yokohama	18,790	19,196
	82,043	78,956

EXPORT OF SILK FROM CHINA AND JAPAN TO AMERICA.

	1895-96	1894-95
	bales.	bales.
Canton	9,190	7,207
Shanghai	9,251	7,857
Yokohama	28,097	22,921
	44,388	37,485

CAMPHOR.

HONGKONG, 17th March.—Large supplies have come forward and prices have fallen. Quotations for Formosa are \$79.00 to \$79.50. During the past week sales have been 300 piculs.

SUGAR.

HONGKONG, 17th March.—Demand has been rather better and prices have slightly advanced. Following are the quotations:—

Shekloong, No. 1, White...	\$7.86 to 7.40	per pic.
do. " 2, White...	6.74 to 6.78	"
Shekloong, No. 1, Brown...	4.72 to 4.75	"
do. " 2 Brown...	4.60 to 4.63	"
Swatow, No. 1, White...	7.32 to 7.35	"
do. " 2, White...	6.70 to 6.72	"
do. " 1, Brown...	4.60 to 4.62	"
Swatow, No. 2, Brown...	4.51 to 4.54	"
Foochow Sugar Candy	10.95 to 11.00	"
Shekloong "	9.80 to 9.84	"

MISCELLANEOUS EXPORTS.

The German steamer *Bellona*, Hongkong to Marseilles, 3rd March, took:—250 boxes Cassia Lignea, 5 cases Private Effects, and 102 rolls Matting; for Havre:—293 rolls Matting, 12 cases Bristles, 92 cases Blackwoodware, 60 cases Chinaware, 5 bales Feathers, 230 bales Bambooware, 9 cases Private Effects, and 4 cases Curios; for Havre option Hamburg:—7 cases Human Hair, 300 cases Camphor, 25 cases Blackwoodware, 92 cases Chinaware, 6 cases Silk Fans, 25 cases Paper, 504 bales Bamboo Scraps, 500 packages Seal and 50 cases Bristles; for Havre option Hamburg option Antwerp:—55 cases Bristles; for Havre option Hamburg option London:—1,110 cases Camphor, and 7 cases Essential Oil; for Havre option Hamburg option London option Antwerp:—11 cases Bristles; for Havre option Hamburg option London:—20 cases Essential Oil; for Hamburg:—100 cases Camphor, 3 cases Bambooware, 2 packages Ten, 45 cases Preserves, 2 cases Silks, 412 packages Canes, 348 rolls Matting, 20 cases Chinaware, 57 cases Bristles, 209 bales Feathers, 20 bales Rattan Savings, 5 cases Private Effects, 50 bales Galangal, 22 cases Palm Leaf Fans, 5 cases Copperware, 24 cases Woolware, 4 cases China Ink, and 18 packages Sundries; for London:—6 bales Feathers, and 6 bales Bristles.

The P. & O. steamer *Borneo*, Hongkong to London, 5th March, took:—768 packages Tea, 2,969 bales Hemp, 76 packages Canes, 50 bales Waste Silk, 30 cases Blackwoodware, 150 cases Preserves, 100 casks Preserves, and 36 packages Sundries.

The steamer *Glenruin*, Hongkong to London, 6th March, took:—500 rolls Matting, 175 bales Waste Silk, and 1 case Private Effects.

The German steamer *Oceana*, Hongkong to Havre, 6th March, took:—151 bales Canes, 5 cases Human Hair, 38 rolls Matting, 136 cases Chinaware, 7 cases Blackwoodware, and 2 cases Silks; for Havre option Hamburg:—48 cases Chinaware, and 3 rolls Matting; for Havre option Hamburg option London:—410 cases Camphor; for Havre option Hamburg option London option Antwerp:—102 bales Feathers; for Hamburg:—130 cases Canes, 25 casks Preserves, 105 rolls Matting, 100 cases Camphor, 18 cases Chinaware, and 3 packages Sundries; for Lisbon:—5 packages China and Lacquered Ware.

The steamer *Diamond*, Hongkong to London, 7th March, took:—10 casks Ginger, 150 cases Ginger, 29 cases Chinaware, 36 cases Cigars, 295 cases Shells, 41 packages Shells, 23 bales Hemp, 30 rolls Mats, 128 bales Canes, 25 drums Paint, and 9 packages Sundries; for London option Manchester:—75 bales Waste Silk; for Liverpool:—1,247 bales Hemp; for Glasgow:—12 cases Blackwoodware; for New York:—15 cases Hats.

OPIUM.

HONGKONG, 17th March.—Bengal.—The market has ruled quiet and rates close at \$79.00 for New Patna, \$80.00 for Old Patna, \$76.00 for New Benares, and \$75.00 for Old Benares.

Malwa.—Prices have weakened owing to a diminution in the demand. The following are the current figures:—

New 750 with allowance 1 to 3 catties.
Old \$760 " 1 to 2 "

Old (3-4 yrs.) 770 " 1 to 1 1/2 "

Persian.—There has not been anything doing in this during the period under review. Latest rates are \$600 to \$630 for Oily and \$180 to \$730 for Paper-wrapped according to quality.

To-day's stocks are estimated as under:—

New Patna	765 chests
Old Patna	918 "
New Benares	503 "
Old Benares	266 "
Malwa	313 "
Persian	1,256 "

COURSE OF THE HONGKONG OILCH MARKET.

DATE.	PATNA.		BEWARES.		MALWA.	
	New.	Old.	New.	Old.	New.	Old.
1896.	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Mar. 12	780	795	780	787 1/2	750/780	770
Mar. 13	785	790	767 1/2	790	750/760	770
Mar. 14	787 1/2	797 1/2	767 1/2	790	750/760	770
Mar. 15	787 1/2	797 1/2	767 1/2	790	750/760	770
Mar. 16	790	800	767 1/2	795	750/760	770
Mar. 17	790	800	765	795	750/760	770

RICE.

HONGKONG, 17th March.—The market is weak and declining. Closing quotations are:—

Saigon, Ordinary	\$2.47 to 2.50
Round, good quality	2.67 to 2.70
Long	2.75 to 2.78
Siam, Field, mill cleaned, No. 2	2.67 to 2.70
Garden, " No. 1	2.85 to 2.87
White	3.00 to 3.20
Fine Cargo	3.81 to 3.84

reported of 100/200 tons L.B. at same rates as last. Nailrods.—Dealers have stocks in hand and purchases "to arrive" sufficient to enable them to continue their holding-off policy for another three months and they appear likely to do this, in the face of present quotations. Should Belgian Iron continue long at its present level it is more than probable that British iron manufacturers will be entering the market in earnest as difference now ruling is slight. Copper and Yellow Metal Sheathings.—Natives are enquiring for both at higher rates, but have not yet come quite up to present requirements. Pig Iron.—100 tons "Shotts" have been sold at Tls. 23 50. Scrap Materials.—Sales have not been numerous, but the market is steady and an advance in values on this side is not improbable.

JOINT STOCK SHARES.

HONGKONG, 17th March.—The market has continued active and a fair business has been put through in most stocks, at, in most cases, advancing rates.

BANKS.—Hongkong and Shanghais have further improved their position, on receipt of definite news of the new Anglo-German China loan of £16,000,000. Shares have changed hands at 187, 188, 189, and 190 per cent. prem., and we hear of one sale to an outport at as high as 192. On time shares were enquired for at the equivalent of the lower rates, but no sellers came forward until the higher rates were reached, when buyers in their turn drew back, and although some few lots changed hands at various rates we have no time business of any importance to report. At time of writing market is easier with sellers at 189 per cent. prem. London quotation is £41.10. Nationals.—No business to report.

MARINE INSURANCES.—China Traders have advanced to \$80, after sales \$78½ and \$79. Yangtzes and North Chinas have changed hands, and Unions and Cantons rule steady, at quotations. Straits are on offer at \$26½ ex div.

FIRE INSURANCES.—Hongkongs have further advanced to \$318, after sales at \$312½ and \$315, closing steady. Chinas have found buyers at \$91 and \$92½, closing at \$93.

SHIPPING.—Hongkong, Canton, and Macaos.—A good many shares have been placed at \$33, \$33½, \$33¾, and \$34 for cash and the end of the month. Forward a few lots changed hands at equivalent rates. Market closes steady at \$33½. Douglas's have ruled neglected at quotation with little or no business. The accounts for last six months are now under audit. Indo-Chinas have continued quiet with small sales at \$63 and \$63½; buyers are now willing to pay \$64, but no shares are obtainable at that rate, and even at \$65 the number obtainable is very limited. China and Manilas continue weak with no business to report. China Mutuals have improved and have changed hands at £2 15s. and £8 10s. ex div. for ordinary and preference shares respectively; market closes firm.

REFINERIES.—Chinas continue steady at quotation, and small sales are reported for cash and equivalent time rates. Luzons have further advanced and have changed hands at \$67, \$68, \$69, \$70, and \$71, market closing at \$70 with some sellers.

MINING.—Punjoms have continued to rule neglected at \$6.75, and we have no business of any importance to report. Raubs, Jelebus, and Balmorals have found buyers in small lots at quotations. The Mining market generally has ruled quiet during the period under review.

DOCKS, WHARVES, AND GODOWNS.—We have to report another boom in Hongkong and Whampoa Docks. The demand reported in our last at 161 continuing, rates gradually rose with a fair amount of business to 173 per cent. prem., after sales at 162, 164, 165, 166, 168, and 170 per cent. prem. On time, a few unimportant transactions at various equivalent rates have been effected. Market closes steady at 173 per cent. prem. Kowloon Wharf shares have been in a small but steady demand, and have changed hands at \$48, closing with sellers. Wanchai Godowns without business.

LANDS, HOTELS, AND BUILDINGS.—Lands have ruled somewhat quieter with sales at \$74, \$74½, and reported ones at \$73; market closes quiet with sellers. Hotels have found buyers at quotation. West Points have changed hands at \$18, and Humphreys Estate at \$91 and \$91.

MISCELLANEOUS.—Watsons have been dealt in in fair lots at \$12.75. Green Islands with rumours of large orders from Formosa have ruled firm and have found buyers at much enhanced values. Shares have changed hands at \$13, \$14, \$15, \$16, \$17, and \$17½ for cash, market closing firm at \$17. Electrics are still wanted at quotation, but we hear of no sales. Ropes have at last settled down and business has been transacted at \$195, \$193, and \$192½, market closing at \$195 with buyers. Fenwicks, upon the issue of a very good report, proposing a div. of 10 per cent., placing \$4,000 to reserve and \$16,490 to credit of next working account, have ruled firm with buyers at \$24, \$25, and \$26, and no sellers. Ices have continued in demand at \$100 to \$101, but no shares are forthcoming except at an advance of a point or two. Dairy Farms are unsaleable at anything over \$2, at which rate a few sporting offers are on the market. The Company's herd has unfortunately been afflicted with cattle plague and some 130 out of about 200 head of cattle have already died. Every precaution is of course being taken, and so far with success, to prevent the plague spreading to the other dairy farms in the island, but it is only too probable that the whole herd of the Dairy Farm Co. is doomed. Two Cotton Mills have improved and are enquired for at Tls. 70 after small sales at \$65 and \$67½.

Closing quotations are as follows:—

COMPANY.	PAID UP.	QUOTATIONS.
Banks—		\$161.25, s. & sellers
Hongkong & S'hai....	\$125	189 p. ct. prem., =
China & Japan, prf.	\$5	nominal
Do. ordinary	\$110s.	nominal
Do. deferred	\$1	\$2, buyers
Natl. Bank of China:		
B. Shares	\$8	\$26
Foun. Shares...	\$1	\$105, sellers
Bell's Asbestos E. A....	15s.	\$10
Brown & Co., H. G.	\$50	\$4, sellers
Campbell, Moore & Co.	\$10	\$5, buyers
Carmichael & Co.	\$20	\$9
China Sugar	\$100	\$119, sales & sellers
Chinese Loan '86 E.	Tls. 250	10 p. ct. prem.
Dakin, Cruick'sk & Co.	\$5	\$1
Dairy Farm Co.	\$10	\$2 buyers
Fenwick & Co., Geo.	\$25	\$26, sales & buyers
Green Island Cement....	\$10	\$17, sales & buyers
H. & C. Bakery	\$50	\$36
Hongkong & C. Gas	\$10	\$100, buyers
Hongkong Electric	\$8	\$7, sales & sellers
H. H. L. Tramways	\$100	\$92½, buyers
Hongkong Hotel	\$50	\$24, sales & sellers
Hongkong Ice	\$25	\$101, buyers
H. & K. Wharf & G....	\$50	\$48, sales
Hongkong Rope.....	\$50	\$195, sales
H. & W. Dock	\$125	173 p. c. prem., =
Insurances—		\$141.25, sales
Canton.....	\$50	\$200, sales & buyers
China Fire	\$50	9½, sales & sellers
China Traders'	\$25	\$80, sales & sellers
Hongkong Fire	\$50	\$318, sales & buyers
North-China	\$25	Tls. 225
Straits	\$20	\$263, ex div. sellers
Union	\$25	\$202½, sales
Yangtze	\$60	\$135
Land and Building—		
H. Land Investment.	\$50	\$73, sales
Humphreys Estate...	\$10	\$9.75, sales
Kowloon Land & B.	\$30	\$17½, buyers
West Point Building	\$40	\$18, sales
Luzon Sugar	\$100	\$70, sales & sellers
Mining—		
Charbonnages	Frs. 500	\$72½
Jelebu	\$5	\$275, buyers
New Balmoral	\$3	\$1.80, sales
Punjom	\$4	6½, sellers
Do. (Preference).	\$1	\$2, sales
Raubs	13s. 10d.	\$4.25, sales & buyers
Steamship Cos.—		
China and Manila ...	\$50	£7.0, sales & sellers
China Mutual	\$5	£2.15, ex div. sales
Do Pref.	\$10	£8.10, ex div. sales
Douglas S. S. Co.	\$50	\$52½, sellers
H. Canton and M....	\$15	\$33½, sales
Indo-China S. N.	\$10	\$64, sales & buyers
Wanchai Wareh'se Co.	\$37½	\$39, sellers
Watson & Co., A. S ...	\$10	\$124, sales & buyers
CHATER & VERNON, Share Brokers.		

SHANGHAI, 13th March.—(From Messrs. J. P. Bisset & Co.'s report.)—The market has been active during the week, and many stocks shew an improvement in prices. Banks.—Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.—Shares were placed on the 9th at 174 per cent. premium, and nothing further was done in the stock until the 11th, when rumours of a loan caused sales to

advance to 185 and 186 per cent. premium. Yesterday it transpired that the Bank, in conjunction with the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank, had arranged a loan to the Chinese Government, on security of the Customs revenue, of £16,000,000, at 5 per cent interest, to run off in 36 years. This caused a strong demand for shares, and business was done at 190 to 192 per cent. premium for cash, 192 and 193 for delivery on the 31st, and 195 for April delivery. Shares were purchased from Hongkong this morning at 190 per cent. premium, co ting 189 and 7½ laid down here, but local sales were made since at 194 and 195 for cash, and 195 for 31st March. National Bank of China, Ltd.—Shares are offering in Hongkong at \$26 ex dividend. Shipping.—Indo-China S. N. shares have been placed at Tls. 47½, H. C. & M. Steamboat shares, to Hongkong, at \$32 and \$33, and China Mutual S. N. Ordinary shares, with £5 paid up, at £2 15s. 0½ ex the dividend of 6 per cent. paid yesterday. Docks.—Shares in Boyd & Co. are offering at Tls. 200. S. C. Farnham & Co. shares have changed hands at Tls. 110 to Tls. 192½ for cash. Hongkong & Whampoa Dock shares have changed hands in Hongkong at 162 per cent. premium. Marine Insurance.—China Traders shares have changed hands in Hongkong at \$78½. Unions were sold to Hongkong at \$195 and \$203. Yangtze shares were placed at \$130 to Hongkong, and locally at \$130 to \$132½ cash, \$30 with exchange 71½, and \$132½ for 31st March, and \$132 for 30th April. Cantons was sold to Hongkong at \$192, and a large business was done in Straits at \$28½ to \$31 cash, \$29½ for March, \$30 for 8th April, and \$30½ to \$1½ for May. The market closes weak with sellers at \$30, while buyers do not offer more than \$29. Fire Insurance.—Hongkongs are wanted in Hongkong at \$310. Chinas have been placed locally at \$88½ to \$91, and to Hongkong at \$92 delivery on the 31st current. Wharves.—Shanghai and Hongkew Wharf Co.—Shares have been sold at Tls. 110 to Tls. 112½ for cash, and Tls. 116½ for delivery on the 30th June. Tugs and Cargo Boats.—Shanghai Tug Boat shares have been placed at Tls. 175. Shanghai Cargo Boat shares were placed at Tls. 220 cum dividend, and Co-operatives at Tls. 191 ex div. Sugars.—Perak Sugar Cultivation shares have changed hands at Tls. 40. A number of China Sugar Refining shares have been sold, chiefly from Hongkong, at \$118 to \$121½ cash, \$121½ for 31st March, \$126 and \$128½ for 30th June, and \$126½ for 31st July. We quote \$120 as the closing cash rate. Luzon Sugar Refining shares have been purchased from Hongkong at \$61 to \$62, and yesterday at \$70, which is the closing cash price. Lands.—Shanghai Land Investment shares with Tls. 30 paid up were sold at Tls. 57½, and fully paid up shares at Tls. 80. Humphreys' Estate and Finance shares were purchased from Hongkong at \$9.50. Factories.—Shares in Major Brothers were placed at Tls. 30 cash, and at the same price for delivery on the 15th April. Laou-kung-mow shares were placed at Tls. 75 and are offering. Miscellaneous.—Business has been done in Shanghai Gas shares at Tls. 260, Shanghai Sumatra Tobacco shares at Tls. 110, Tls. 109, and Tls. 105 for cash, and Tls. 110 for 31st March, Shanghai Langkat Tobacco shares at Tls. 310 and Tls. 315 cash and Tls. 320 for 30th April. Shanghai Horse Bazaar shares at Tls. 58 to Tls. 60 cash, and Hull and Holtz shares at \$32 cash and \$33 for 31st current. Loans.—Municipal Debentures of 1895 changed hands at Tls. 101, Land Investment Debentures of 1892 at Tls. 105, and Shanghai and Hongkew Wharf Debentures at Tls. 110, plus the accrued interest in all cases.

TUESDAY, 17th March.
CLOSING-QUOTATIONS.
EXCHANGE.

ON LONDON.—	
Telegraphic Transfer	2/2½
Bank Bills, on demand	2/2½
Bank Bills, at 30 days' sight	—
Bank Bills, at 4 months' sight	2/2½
Credits, at 4 months' sight	2/3
Documentary Bills, 4 months' sight	2/3½
ON PARIS.—	
Bank Bills, on demand	2.79
Credits, at 4 months' sight	2.84
ON GERMANY.—	
On demand	2.26
ON NEW YORK.—	
Bank Bills, on demand	—
Credits, 60 days' sight	—
ON BOMBAY.—	
Telegraphic Transfer	182
Bank, on demand	182½

ON CALCUTTA.—	
Telegraphic Transfer	182
Bank, on demand	182½
ON SHANGHAI.—	
Bank, at sight	71½
Private, 30 days' sight	72½
ON YOKOHAMA.—	
On demand	3 % pm.
ON MANILA.—	
On demand	16 % pm.
ON SINGAPORE.—	
On demand	1 % pm.
SOVEREIGNS, Bank's Buying Rate	8.84
GOLD LEAF, 100 fine, peratael	47

TONNAGE.

SHANGHAI, 13th March (from Messrs. Wheelock & Co.'s report.)—We reported in our last that the Conference rate to New York had returned to 40s., and now we have to record the appearance of an opposition steamer *Queen Olga*, circulated to load at 25s. per ton of 40 cubic feet. It seems hardly probable that she will meet with any support from here, now that the Conference year is drawing to a close, and shippers have more at stake, in the shape of 10 per cent. return on past shipments, than the difference of 15s. to a ton would compensate them for, in the event of their availing themselves of the lower rate. Should she, however, be supported, Conference shippers will of course receive that consideration which they have always understood would be extended to them in the event of opposition appearing. Coastwise.—The steamers have left for the north, most of them on the 5th instant, and some are expected back to-day with what cargo was awaiting shipment. For London *via* Suez.—We have no improvement to report, and at the moment the amount of tonnage offering is more than sufficient, viz.: *Tantalus* to sail to-morrow the 14th, *Bombay* 16th. Rates of freight are:—From Shanghai to London by Conference Lines, general cargo 40s.; waste silk 45s.; tea 50s.; Northern Continental ports, general cargo 42s. 6d.; waste silk 45s.; tea 50s.; New York, general cargo 40s.; tea 40s.; New York *via* London, general cargo 50s.; tea 50s.; Boston, general cargo 42s. 6d.; Philadelphia, general cargo 50s. Above rates are subject to a deferred return, as per Conference circular. London by Shell Line, general cargo 40s. less 10 per cent.; Hamburg, general cargo 35s. net; New York, general cargo 50s. less 10 per cent. Hayre direct, general cargo 37s. 6d. net; Genoa, tallow 35s. general cargo 40s. net; Marseilles, tallow 35s.; general cargo 37s. 6d. net. 45s. per ton of 20 cwt. for above three ports. New York by sail, 27s. 6d.; New York by Pacific Lines, little doing. Coast rates are:—Moji to Shanghai \$1.10 per ton coal; Nagasaki to Shanghai \$1 per ton coal. No disengaged vessel in port.

VESSELS ON THE BERTH.

For LONDON.—*Bombay* (str.), *Nestor* (str.), *Telena* (str.), *Tosa Maru* (str.), *Formosa* (str.), *Rosetta* (str.).
For BREMEN.—*Preussen* (str.).
For HAVRE.—*Dorothea Rickmers* (str.), *Frigga* (str.).
For SAN FRANCISCO.—*Gaelic* (str.), *City of Peking* (str.), *Coloma*, *Queen Elizabeth*.
For VICTORIA.—*Tacoma* (str.).
For NEW YORK.—*Cerastes*, *Queen Olga* (str.), *T. F. Oakes*, *Tam O'Shanter*.
For AUSTRALIA.—*Guthrie* (str.), *Tsinan* (str.).

SHIPPING.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES SINCE LAST MAIL.

HONGKONG.

March—	ARRIVALS.
11,	China, German str., from Saigon.
11,	Guthrie, British str., from Kobe.
11,	Huapeh, British str., from Sourabaya.
11,	Staathallan, British str., from Hongay.
12,	Frogner, Norw. str., from Bangkok.
12,	Benlarig, British str., from Singapore.
12,	Anjer Head, British str., from Saigon.
12,	Wuotan, German str., from Saigon.
12,	Foochow, British str., from Amoy.
12,	Tailee, German str., from Swatow.
12,	Teenkai, British str., from Liverpool.
12,	Chintung, Chinese str., from Canton.
12,	Alger, French ironclad, from a cruise.
12,	Decima, German str., from Saigon.
13,	Senta, German str., from Kobe.
13,	Devawongse, British str., from Bangkok.
13,	Menelaus, British str., from Liverpool.
13,	Jacob Christensen, Norw. str., from Saigon.
13,	Michael Jebsen, Ger. str., from Pakhoi.
13,	Ask, Danish str., from Haiphong.
14,	Foochow, British str., from Canton.

14,	Cassius, German str., from Saigon.
14,	Hydaspe, British str., from Bombay.
14,	Fushun, Chinese str., from Shanghai.
14,	Tientsin, British str., from Canton.
14,	Gaelic, British str., from San Francisco.
14,	Activ, Danish str., from Pakhoi.
14,	Kirkhill, British str., from Bombay.
15,	Gen. Alava, Span. troopship, from Manila.
15,	Hailoong, British str., from Tamsui.
15,	Ingraban, German str., from Bangkok.
15,	Wing Hong, British str., from Swatow.
16,	Canton, British str., from Shanghai.
16,	Bygdo, Norw. str., from Saigon.
16,	Loosok, British str., from Bangkok.
16,	Fuk Po, Chinese transpt., from a cruise.
16,	Lyderhorn, Norw. str., from Chinkiang.
16,	Pakhoi, French str., from Chinkiang.
16,	Changsha, British str., from Sydney.
16,	Elektra, Austrian str., from Trieste.
16,	Independent, Ger. str., from Sourabaya.
16,	Kiangpack, Chinese str., from Chinkiang.
16,	Namyong, British str., from Singapore.
16,	Benmohr, British str., from Moji.
16,	Elax, British str., from Singapore.
16,	Sishan, British str., from Saigon.
16,	Taichiow, British str., from Bangkok.
17,	Pigmy, British g.-bt., from a cruise.
17,	Loksang, British str., from Canton.
17,	Deuterios, German str., from Canton.
17,	Nanyang, German str., from Canton.
17,	Haitan, British str., from Coast Ports.
17,	Melbourne, French str., from Shanghai.
March—	DEPARTURES.
12,	Apenrade, German str., for Swatow.
12,	Deuterios, German str., for Canton.
12,	Formosa, British str., for Swatow.
12,	Idzumi Maru, Jap. str., for Yokohama.
12,	Nanyang, German str., for Canton.
12,	Wing Hong, British str., for Swatow.
12,	Albingia, German str., for Amoy.
12,	Brindisi, British str., for London.
12,	Carmarthenshire, Brit. str., for Yokohama.
12,	Chintung, Chinese str., for Foochow.
12,	Hohenzollern, Ger. str., for Yokohama.
12,	Lyeemoon, German str., for Shanghai.
12,	Mirzapore, British str., for Europe.
12,	Preussen, German str., for Shanghai.
12,	Strathallan, Brit. str., for Canton.
12,	Zafiro, British str., for Manila.
13,	Afridi, British str., for Saigon.
13,	Foochow, British str., for Canton.
13,	Benledi, British str., for Saigon.
13,	Frejr, Danish str., for Hoihow.
13,	Namoa, British str., for Swatow.
13,	Ancona, British str., for Yokohama.
13,	Teenkai, British str., for Shanghai.
14,	Ariake Maru, Jap. str., for Kutchinotzn.
14,	Hanoi, French str., for Haiphong.
14,	On Sang, British str., for Java.
14,	Propontis, British str., for Singapore.
15,	Anara, British str., for Shanghai.
15,	Benlarig, British str., for Kobe.
15,	Foochow, British str., for Chefoo.
15,	Fushun, French str., for Canton.
15,	Holstein, German str., for Saigon.
15,	Huapeh, British str., for Amoy.
15,	Machew, British str., for Bangkok.
15,	Michael Jebsen, German str., for Swatow.
15,	Oslo, Norw. str., for Port Darwin.
15,	Tientsin, British str., for Shanghai.
16,	Pigmy, British gunboat, for a cruise.
16,	Canton, British str., for Canton.
16,	Foochow, British str., for Chefoo.
16,	Pakhoi, British str., for Canton.
16,	Senta, German str., for Hamburg.
16,	Vorwaerts, German str., for Tamsui.
16,	Fuk Po, Chinese transport, for Canton.
17,	Ask, Danish str., for Hoihow.
17,	Bygdo, Norw. str., for Canton.
17,	Hailoong, British str., for Swatow.
17,	Loosok, British str., for Canton.
17,	Wing Hoeg, British str., for Swatow.
17,	Elektra, Austrian str., for Shanghai.
17,	Guthrie, British str., for Sydney.
17,	Kiangpack, Chinese str., for Canton.
17,	Lightning, British str., from Calcutta.
17,	Macduff, British str., for Saigon.
17,	Ocampo, British str., for Kobe.
17,	Tetartos, German str., for Amoy.
17,	Wuotan, German str., for Saigon.

	PASSENGER LIST.
	ARRIVED.
Per Ocampo,	steamer, from Australia, &c.—
Messrs. J. H. Lindsay, and Fredericks.	
Per Preussen,	str., from Bremen—Mr. and Mrs. Howard Ringer, Mr. and Mrs. H. Schröter,
Messrs. Joh. Laets, A. J. Gardiner, R. T. Crane, J. W. Hall, H. U. Harris, F. A. Vuck, F. R. Henneberg, Franklin Brooks, and J. Bosshardt, Capt. T. H. Balfour, and Dr. W. Franklin.	
Per Benlarig,	str., from London, &c.—Mr. Mowbridge.
Per Guthrie,	str., from Kobe—Mrs. Rosenthal, Mr. W. Glen, and Master Glen.
Per Teenkai,	str., from Liverpool, &c.—Mr. and Mrs. Mayne and child.
Per Gaelic,	str., from San Francisco, &c.—Rev. Lewis Quick, and Dr. Wilm.
Per Hailoong,	str., from Tamsui, &c.—Capt. Barcham, Messrs. Butler and Grindlay.
Per Canton,	steamer, from Shanghai for Hongkong.—Lieut. D. Dow, Mrs. Euanson, and Capt. Hay. For Swatow.—Mrs. Focken, Mr. and Mrs. Dawson and three children.
Per Loosok,	str., from Bangkok—Miss Smith.
Per Elektra,	str., from Trieste, &c.—Messrs. Meyer, Clifford, and Gentner.
Per Changsha,	str., from Sydney—Major and Mrs. Loyd and two children, Lord Dunsdale, Messrs. Shaw, Muir, Wilson, Hizo, Mallens, McLaren, Hatch, Hennessey, Graham, and Lomas Smith, Mrs. Hennessey, Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Lomas Smith, and Mrs. Daley.
	DEPARTED.
Per Shanghai,	str., for Shanghai from London—Capt. J. P. McEuen.
Per Chelydra,	str., for Singapore—Captain Davis. For Calcutta—Messrs. Blum and Norman.
Per Mirzapore,	str., from Hongkong for Singapore—Mr. H. Borner. For Brindisi—Mr. D. Landale. For London—Sub-Lieut. Hendy P. B. Smith. Commander R. H. L. Risk, R.N., Messrs. R. Wood, B. F. Ramsey, R. Thomson, James McDonald, Angus McVicar, J. Hodge, Wm. Cameron, Jos. Zanazzi, J. O'Brien, O. G. Milligan, D. MacAulay, J. Cheeseman, and S. J. Walden. From Yokohama for Bombay—Mrs. W. Calderwood. For London—Mrs. K. S. Okura. From Kobe for London—Messrs. S. Akiba and M. N. Yoshida. From Shanghai—For Colombo—Mr. C. C. Collier. For Brindisi—Messrs. H. B. Pike, F. S. A. Bourne and Stahlgren, and Lieut. Solomko. For London via Marseilles—Messrs. W. H. Marks and Clinton Jensen. For London—Mr. and Mrs. Angus.
Per Preussen,	str., for Shanghai from Genoa—Messrs. C. Luhrs, M. Homann, B. Gumann, R. Rohm, and E. Frohlig, Mr. and Mrs. P. Wilkinson. From Naples—Dr. Zimmerman, Mr. and Mrs. Schroter, and Mr. B. Willkomm. From Bremen—Misses L. Gust, A. Lindguss, S. Malmstrom, Laura Hanson, H. Larson, Elise Jacobson, Anna Johansen, Anna Anderson, Anna Ludblatt, E. Erikson, Albertina Yorsen, and A. Richise, Messrs. O. Forsberg, A. Pahn, C. Blomberg, Otto Ohberg, and M. Nustrom. From Southampton—Messrs. J. Prentice, H. Karelberg, Y. Sven Person, C. M. York, J. Valentine, Kennedy, Dr. Gillison, Rev. and Mrs. J. Fjellstrom. From Antwerp—Mr. P. Fernwick. From Singapore—Mr. and Mrs. Ch. W. Home, Mrs. O. Sang. From Hongkong—Mrs. Kirchmer, Major Johnson, Messrs. J. Schwela, Leo. von Wonendorff, J. H. Garrels, J. H. Perry, J. Gibson, J. H. Cocksedge, C. Galland, J. B. Mallow, A. F. Imhoff, Grossmann, and O. King Sang.
Per Hohenzollern,	str., for Yokohama—Col. and Mrs. Cuniberti, Rev. and Mrs. Moore, Mr. and Mrs. Haufmann von Scheven, Rev. Shard and family, Messrs. T. H. Karshaw, W. H. Cook, and H. Lindsay Fitzpatrick. For Hyogo—Mrs. C. Westphalen, Messrs. Raspes and family and Schwanke. For Nagasaki—Mr. On Sing Sang.
Per Ancona,	str., from Hongkong for Yokohama—Mrs. R. D. Lock, Mrs. Tocque and child, Misses Schwann (2), Rev. W. Feistkorn, Messrs. Albert E. Smith, E.R.A., A. P. Brown, Sestier, and C. L. Plant. For Kobe—Sir John Poynder, Messrs. E. W. Beckett, Da Silva, and F. Brooks. For Nagasaki from London—Rev. W. Trollop, Messrs. Badoeck and Hillary. For Kobe from Colombo—Hon. H. Elphinstone. For Yokohama from London—Rev. and Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Memps and child, Messrs. Poroh, W. Vernon, F. W. Whitlock, and C. W. Baird. From Brindisi—Mr. and Mrs. Whitney, Mr. Guthrie. From Ismailia—Count Oriola, Dr. and Mrs. Miller, Count Nako, Mr. Gowthorpe. Mr. and Mrs. Robertson, Miss Douglas. From Bombay—Lady Nesta Fitzgerald and Lady Eva Fitzgerald.